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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

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OCTOBER 1981

NO. 10

SEP 22 '81

Sidney Hook: On John Kenneth Galbraith

Petr Beckmann: Antinuclear Malpractice

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EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS



• August. On the mountaintop Ron rests, and below in the valley 1970s New Age gasconade swats flies and runs for its life. The Mullah Brown, who once promised to lead us over the nefarious forces of the Fortune 500, modern science, and villainies too heinous to contemplate, is being slowly entombed by the lowly Mediterranean fruit fly, and his kook mob of New Age constituents have left him to suffer in solitude. Some have beheld the clouds of malathion and feared for their persons. Some have taken with the fruits. Still others, without question, have grown elegiacal over the flies. They stoop to pick up every winged victim. They carry it remorsefully to a common grave. They send petitions to the Friends of the Earth and the Audubon Society demanding that the wretched Medfly be put on the endangered species list before it is too late. Then they snort some coke, and pray to Beelzebub for the soul of Jerry Brown and all the other fallen messiahs of yon years.

• Two Libyan fighters over international waters fired upon two American F-14 Tomcats and were duly turned into scenery for the fishes, thus teaching that when attacking Americans it remains preferable to attack unarmed Americans. Peter Fonda laid violent hands upon a sign reading "Feed Jane Fonda to the Whales." And in Annapolis, Maryland, a 20-year-old man died while attempting to swallow a live fish.

• England's royal newlyweds returned from their two-week cruise of the Mediterranean, still smiling and waving ebulliently. The happy couple flew to England on a RAF VC-10 on August 15, and according to informed sources Princess Diana began waving a full hour before the plane landed. First she waved to her startled cabin attendants, then she burst into the captain's cabin and waved to members of the crew individually, then she seated herself by a window and waved for twenty minutes before the plane even landed. If this behavior distressed the Prince, he gave no indication and, in fact, once the plane landed his Royal Highness joined with his wife in smiling and waving the instant the plane's door was opened. Then Prince and Princess motored to the Queen's estate, Balmoral, where they spent the remainder of the month laughing and reading American comic books. By the end of the month rumors that Princess Diana was in the family way began circulating, and not a minute too soon. Pictures from Balmoral had shown the Prince to be wearing what seemed to be some sort of skirt, and the news of the Princess's impending tumescence was reassuring indeed.

• In Marseilles, France, a 22-year-old music student in the second balcony of the Marseilles Opera House became so inflamed during a performance of *Parsifal* that he assumed the pose of a pterodactyl and hurled himself toward

the stage. Unfortunately his navigational calculations were off, landing him in unoccupied front row seats, damaging his person terribly, and spoiling the evening for everyone else. Meanwhile back in the United States, customs officials in Los Angeles arrested a foreign student from Nigeria when they became suspicious of a slimy substance trailing from her coat. Upon inspection it was discovered that she had sewn into the coat's lining a dozen Giant African Snails, some of them a foot long, and all of them disgusting.

• In a strategic decision revealing its reverence for what Dr. Russell Kirk has called the permanent things, the Reagan administration announced its decision to assemble the neutron bomb, the bomb that destroys human beings but not structures. *Playboy* magazine editors may have a goldmine available to them if only Mr. George J. Dailey of South San Jose, California, can write. Mr. Dailey is the 290-pound sewage plant worker and connoisseur of erotica who has been accused of kidnapping a 12-year-old girl, holding her captive for 157 days, and committing a dozen felonious acts not the least of which was lewd and lascivious conduct. It was a mixed month for homosexual cowboys. Thousands fornicated upon Reno, Nevada, for the sixth annual National Homosexual Rodeo; but when San Francisco's toughies attempted to duplicate the spectacle with a homosexual rodeo of their own they were ambushed by a cabal of kooks, namely: a group calling itself Gays and Friends for Animal Rights (GAFFAR). Protesting that, in the words of Mr. Eric Mills, "Rodeo is an exercise in domination, man or woman, over beast, one step removed from rape," GAFFAR made it impossible for San Francisco homosexuals to raise the money necessary to bring their rodeo to fruition.

• In church news, the Rev. Jimmy Conyers was convicted in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, of slavery. The Rev. Conyers is the fourth potentate in the Church of God and True Holiness to be sentenced for the enslavement of church members. In Memphis, Tennessee, three ministers employed strong orisons and golf putters to repulse an aspiring mugger who had accosted them while they were in the act of golfing. Finally, such progressive ecclesiastics as the Bishop Paul Moore were given much to ruminate upon when 3,000 sodomites attending a six-day meeting of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches proposed eliminating male references to God in favor of such "sexually balanced" terms as "the Breasted One," "nurturer," and "Floral Arrangements."

• August witnessed an illegal nation-wide strike by federal air traffic controllers which took a nasty turn during an Ozark Air Lines flight from New Orleans to St. Louis. It was on that flight that the U.S. Congressman William

L. Clay was cruelly humiliated by an Ozark pilot. The Hon. Clay, a champion of the traffic controllers who has accepted campaign contributions of over \$8,000 from them and placed a bill in Congress to raise the base pay for some to \$102,788, sent a brisk note to the pilot warning him that he did not want to hear any more personal views on aerodynamics or the strike over the pilot's public address system, only to have the pilot inform him that he had misspelled aerodynamics. Thousands of music lovers gathered at the home of Elvis Presley to commemorate his death. August 16 was the fourth anniversary of the singer's fatal bowel movement. A luscious cheese sandwich thwarted Mr. Mark Chapman's two-day long hunger strike, and on August 24 the murderer was sentenced to 20 years-to-life in the hoosegow for shooting Mr. John Lennon.

• Gloom continues to mount for Mr. Abolhasan Bani Sadr, the recently cashiered President of Iran. On August 22 his foul-tempered wife Osra flew to Paris and was granted political asylum before Mr. Bani-Sadr could make any move to protect himself. Three congressmen convicted in the ABSCAM scandals were given prison sentences, and on August 25 the Senate ethics committee voted unanimously to recommend the expulsion of Senator Harrison A. Williams, the ABSCAM scandals' only senator. And that jailbird belletrist, Mr. Jack Henry Abbott, whose letters to Mr. Norman Mailer made him such a sensation at the *New York Review of Books*, is still on the lam. Mr. Abbott's high art stirred the eminent and humane Mr. Terrence Des Pres to sing in the July 19 issue of the *New York Times Book Review* that Abbott's *In the Belly of the Beast* is "awesome, brilliant, perversely ingenuous; its impact is indelible and as an articulation of penal nightmare it is completely compelling." On July 18, the awesome Mr. Abbott allegedly rammed a knife into the heart of a New York City waiter who had refused him the use of a toilet.

• From Peking comes word that "Jingle Bells" is the favorite American tune among the Chinese. Poet Karl Shapiro is suing Dr. Ronald Fieve and his publisher for claiming in Fieve's *Moodswing, the Third Revolution in Psychology* that Shapiro had committed suicide. A federal appeals court in Denver has dismissed a suit filed by a Salt Lake City man whose ultimately fatal bed-wetting problems had been repeatedly misdiagnosed by military doctors. French seaman Mr. Joseph Buillou has been arrested in Morocco and charged with blasphemy for replacing a shipboard picture of King Hassan II with a large and obscene sausage. And, finally, sex educators all over America were given something to whoop about when it was announced in *Parents* magazine that one teenage girl out of ten becomes pregnant each year. Congratulations teachers! —RET

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EDITORIAL



MY KIND OF BOMB

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Last month, in the afterglow of the Reagan administration's admission that, yes, it had decided to assemble the neutron bomb, I plugged my ears and prepared for the worst.

You will recall that the Pericles of Plains, Georgia, had decided to leave the neutron bomb in pieces so as not to arouse the successors of Bertrand Russell and Nikita Khrushchev. Well, according to Washington's cognoscenti, now even our NATO allies favor deterrent weapons that are unusable. Poor Ron had really stepped into it this time, and so I awaited a painful brouhaha. Yet, Ron apparently remains in favor with the gods. Europe took the decision calmly, and once again the cognoscenti are wearing the dunce's cap. The French applauded. Others winked and passed on.

The only noticeable squawks came from the same old hen houses: those situated in Scandinavia, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and various left-wing haunts here and abroad. Of the aforementioned squawkers I believe our Soviet friends have the most to squawk about. They now have more than 40,000 tanks ready to bring proletarian revolution to Western Europe. Were war to ignite between the Soviets and the West, those tanks would blitzkrieg across the European plain with devastating force. Unless NATO resorted to tactical nuclear weapons, many analysts fear that these tanks would roll up to the English Channel in a matter of days. In their wake would be destruction, death, and the KGB. So much for Europe.

But tactical nuclear weapons are ferociously destructive, and concentrating their destructive force on a

specific target is impossible. Once set off, these weapons indiscriminately destroy lives, both civilian and military. The prospect of using them in Europe has caused anxiety within the NATO alliance for years, much to the joy of Soviet strategists whose growing armor increases that anxiety still more.

Now along come those inventive Yanks with a tactical nuclear weapon that can be hurled at oncoming tanks, killing only their crews and infantry support, and leaving nearby civilian

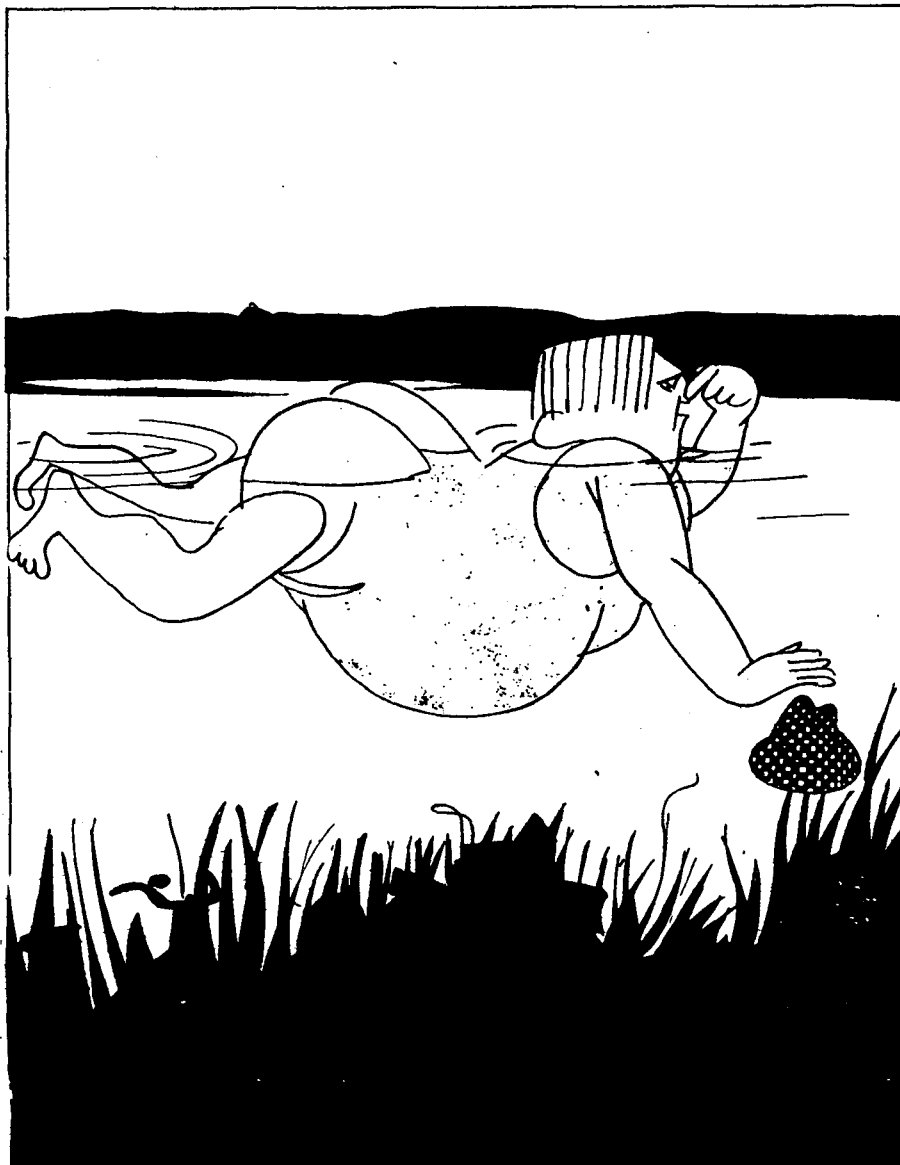
populations and buildings intact. It is all very good news for those who want to see Europeans freed from the disabling fear of an imminent Soviet invasion and from the enervating pessimism that has so recently haunted their foreign policies. It is also good news for those who admire European architecture and for those who deal in the used tank market.

Yes, the Soviets are irate, and they have every reason to be. They have spent a lot of very dear rubles on that tank force of theirs, but what

good will it be if its crews are certain to be turned into terminal cases as soon as they cross into Western Europe? Let us try to look at the neutron bomb from the Soviet Union's point of view. A war that only kills soldiers? What kind of war is that? The Politburo's favorite human beings are soldiers. A war that does not destroy nearby villages? When the Red Army goes into battle it relishes the destruction of villages. Any Afghan peasant can tell you that.

For that matter, when the Red Army mixes it up, the primary objective seems to be not victory but the utmost slaughter and destruction. Not only are villages laid waste, but whole cities and countries, too, the better to raise up a new order in the image and likeness of Dr. Marx and to give Soviet commanders a sense of achievement. The neutron bomb does not merely threaten the mammoth Soviet tank force, it also takes the fun out of the Soviet style of battle. Neutron warfare is sissy warfare.

Contrary to the neutron bomb's critics who insist that the bomb will dangerously disturb the balance of forces in Europe, the bomb will help to re-establish that balance and in a very benign way. It puts up a fence against potential invaders, while adding very little to the West's offensive capability. Offensive war is what the friends of peace should oppose most staunchly. We must be most concerned about the huge SS-20 missiles that the Soviets have targeted on Western Europe, and the Pershing and cruise missiles with which we plan to counter them. Let us seriously negotiate the removal of these monsters. As for the neutron bomb, remember the poesy of Robert Frost: Good fences make good neighbors. □



Adapted from RET's weekly column syndicated by King Features.

MY KIND OF ART

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Columnist George F. Will has seen enemy action on many fronts, often acquitting himself quite well. True, he is somewhat too prone to controversy for my tastes, but he is generally intelligent and humane. Last month, however, there sounded in his commentary a very ugly note, which, I suppose, we progressives should have anticipated. Will dis-

approves of contemporary art. In fact, he holds it up to derision.

Will has taken his conservatism too far this time. Of course, on matters of contemporary aesthetics there is always room for informed give and take, but what is so funny about modern masterworks such as "Vertical Kilometer," a kilometer-long brass rod, buried in a kilometer-long

hole? Despite the fact that generous connoisseurs were willing to pay \$300,000 for it, Will thought it was very funny. And what is so humorous about "Room Temperature," featuring a water bucket, four apples, six balloons (uninflated), and two flies? The flies, after all, had expired.

Will derided these works along

with others in his syndicated column. And now he is paying dearly for his Philistine outbursts. All across the Republic newspaper correspondence columns are filling with reproachful letters from assistant professors of art. Sometimes they come from associate professors and even full

(continued on page 41)

C A P I T O L I D E A S

EVERY WORD OF IT TRUE

by Tom Bethell

Once upon a time I had tea with Kitty and Malcolm Muggeridge at their Sussex farmhouse, and the conversation soon turned to a most remarkable article which had been published that morning in the (London) *Daily Telegraph*. The article, by a certain P. T. Bauer, decisively refuted in as many paragraphs half a dozen prevalent ideas about the Third World: Colonial rulers didn't steal the rubber from Malaysia or the tea from India; on the contrary, they planted it there in the first place. If Third World countries have been exploited by the West, how come those countries with little or no contact with the West turn out to be the most backward of all? Foreign aid to Third World countries not only has done no good; it has actively interfered with economic advance in those countries. And so on. As you can imagine, it made for delicious reading among us *Daily Telegraph* addicts (retired colonels, former colonial administrators, deposed monarchs, and so forth).

Muggeridge seemed to have been put in rare good form by the article. "Every word of it true!" he exclaimed, raising a cup of (Indian) tea to his lips. "Who is this Bauer?" he then wanted to know.

Regrettably, I had to confess my ignorance. But I have often since tried to imagine his astonished

delight had I been able to identify the gentleman then and there. Bauer was the professor of economics—the chairman of the department!—at none other than the London School of Economics, itself founded by Kitty Muggeridge's aunt and uncle, Beatrice and Sidney Webb. The school, of course, has turned out to be a prime incubator of socialism, and a principal carrier of the germs thereof to distant parts, notably the Third World. The knowledge that so sensible a man as P. T. Bauer was now installed as professor of economics at

the dreaded school founded by his in-laws would, I have since thought, have done much to clear away (for a week at least) the clouds of pessimism that gather so readily about the Sage of Robertsbridge.

Bauer is now 66 years old, and I gather recently stepped down as chairman of the LSE economics department. But he recently favored us with a visit to Washington, having been invited to speak to some clergymen by Michael Novak of the

American Enterprise Institute. He also spoke at a luncheon organized by the Council for a Competitive Economy. Here I had an opportunity to meet the great man (he is small, feisty, exuberant, and Hungarian), grasp him by the hand, and offer both congratulations to him and condolences to the ghosts of Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

Bauer's arrival in the United States coincided with the publication of his new book *Equality, The Third World and Economic Delusion* (Harvard University Press). This is essentially a reprint of the various articles he has written on foreign aid over the past ten years, but there is also quite a bit of new material. Those who have not already read such Bauerian gems as "Western Guilt and Third World Poverty," (originally published in *Commentary*), or his articles in *Encounter*, and are interested in aid, ideology, and international economics should make every effort to get hold of this book.

It is unusual, I think, to come across in any field such a complete and decisive demolition of the conventional wisdom. This is doubly surprising inasmuch as Bauer seems to have been alone in the endeavor, and the field itself is a large and important one. Foreign aid has somehow managed to wrap itself in such an intimidating cloak of necessity and finality that controversy has fled. It is inconceivable, for example, that an editorial should appear in the *New York Times* questioning the value of international transfer payments, or casting doubt



Tom Bethell, The American Spectator's Washington correspondent, holds the DeWitt Wallace Chair in Communications at the American Enterprise Institute.

on the utility of the World Bank, or chastizing Third World countries for begging rather than reforming their own political structures in such a way as to encourage economic growth. Such opinions are not only out of order at present, they can scarcely even be brought up for debate. Witness the instant canonization of the recently deceased Barbara Ward, the hortatory moralist who managed to pass herself off as an economist. Her opinions on foreign aid were as harmful to the Third World as they were influential in the West. There is only one sense in which foreign aid can be criticized in "mainstream thought" (as Bauer calls it). That is to complain that there should be much more of it.

So Bauer has had a rich field to himself, although a critique in some ways complementary to Bauer's, *Wealth of Nations In Crisis*, by Ronald C. Nairn, has also recently been published. Bauer himself is obviously astonished at the "disconcerting hiatus between accepted opinion and evident reality" in the field of foreign aid, and he shrewdly remarks that when very widely accepted ideas are criticized, then that criticism "is at times regarded as a form of intellectual blasphemy or even moral blasphemy, when the ideas rejected are thought to embody moral precepts."

Here is a loose interpretation of some of Bauer's arguments: There is a collection of countries called "the Third World" (also variously known as "the South," "the less developed," "the underdeveloped," or "the developing world." A new

name arises just as soon as the old one begins to arouse suspicion among taxpayers). The defining characteristic of these countries is that they receive foreign aid from the West. They are unanimously resentful of the West, but this is not because they were "exploited" in their former incarnation as colonies. It is because a posture of accusation is needed to maintain the necessary degree of guilt and abasement among the aid givers (who themselves, of course, welcome such accusation since it keeps them in business among other things). Recipients of handouts tend to hate their benefactors anyway. Moreover, the rationale for aid is itself condescending enough to provoke hatred of the West. As Bauer writes, the Third World is perceived by McNamara's Band at the World Bank as

... sunk in poverty, helpless and at the mercy of their environment, exploited by the West, caught in a vicious circle of poverty, unable to control their own fertility, devoid of will and with little capacity for individual action. In short they are like paupers or children. On the other side of a vast gulf are the prosperous people of the West, partly conditioned by their environment but with a will of their own, active but malign, responsible for the plight of the world's poor but unwilling to improve it. There is no doubt that we are the superior group in this scenario. The West emerged from poverty; the Third World cannot without massive help.

Far from the West having caused Third World poverty, Bauer adds, "contact with the West has been the principal agent of material progress there." By contrast, "some of the most backward countries never were colonies, as for instance, Af-

ghanistan, Tibet, Nepal, Liberia."

Nor can the pressure of population be blamed. "Contemporary famines and food shortages occur mostly in sparsely populated subsistence economies with abundant land. There is no shortage of land in such areas as Ethiopia, the Sahel, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire." Moreover, "it is notable that no famines are reported from such densely populated regions of the less developed world as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia . . ."

Highly misleading per-capita income statistics create the illusion that the now-lower death rate in Third World countries causes poverty, because family income must be divided up by the larger number of dependents. Children continue to be regarded as a source of wealth and joy, however, not impoverishment. Robert McNamara, who fortunately retired recently as president of the World Bank, has nonetheless complained that "the greatest single obstacle to the economic and social advancement of the majority of peoples in the underdeveloped world is population growth."

(Poor Mr. McNamara, one is tempted to digress, is fated to be wrong about everything he touches. He was wrong about the Edsel, wrong about Vietnam "body counts," and finally—in a desperate attempt to recover the esteem of the liberal-left—he is once again wrong about development, comparing "population pressures" to "the threat of nuclear war." In his 13 years at the World Bank this supposedly brilliant man failed to grasp the most elementary feature of economics, which is

that people *create* wealth and do not merely consume it.)

One of the worst features of aid is that it props up tyrannical regimes and oppressive (socialist) governments. Capitalist economies are always successful enough to do without aid. Socialist economies demand it and nearly always receive it because they are always in such terrible shape. The money is then disbursed by the dictator in question to maintain his palace guard and so remain in power. An appalling example is that of Julius Nyerere, the sanctimonious Tanzanian despot who drove half the population of his country out of their native villages, mouthed the slogans of "compassionate" socialism, ran the Tanzanian economy into the ground, stuck his paw out for more and more money, and finally ended up as Jimmy Carter's pen pal and McNamara's favorite foreign aid junkie.

One of the most oppressive features of Third World aid-supported countries such as Tanzania is their high income-tax rates, taking effect at moderate income levels. Bauer might have made more of this point. (It is, however, stressed in another excellent volume, Bruce Bartlett's *Reaganomics*, published by Arlington House.) My suspicion also is that a good many of these Third World countries, especially the African ones, will never flourish economically, no matter how low their tax rates, as long as they ignore or repudiate property rights, which have formed the basis for the great economic advance in the West in the past 200 years. In fact, the failure by contemporary economists to understand the crucial role of property rights in the creation of wealth is one of the principal defects of contemporary economics.

Finally, there is the debilitating inversion of effort and reward. To quote Bauer at his best:

advocacy and inflow of aid lends support to the idea that improvement in one's fortune depends on other people, the government, the rich, one's superiors, or foreigners. Here again aid pauperizes the recipients. They are encouraged to expect success without achievement, to believe that material reward depends on windfalls, and to want the results of economic success without the antecedent process. Aid promotes the delusion that a society can progress from indigence to prosperity without the intermediate stage of economic effort and achievement.

I can still hear Malcolm Muggeridge's voice: "Every word of it true!" □





Sidney Hook

THE WORLDLY WAYS OF JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

When it comes to knowledge of the theory and practice
of Communism, J.K. Galbraith remains an innocent.

Like other autobiographies of contemporary figures, J. K. Galbraith's *A Life in Our Times** may be approached on various levels and from various points of view. As a story it is a fascinating account of the ascent of a Canadian farm boy to dizzying political heights in the United States where he became a spokesman and at times a critic of the Establishment. To be sure, those he supported, with the exception of JFK's fluke victory, lost, despite not because of his counsel. But it is hardly disputable that if Stevenson, McGovern, or Edward Kennedy had ascended to the presidency, Galbraith would have been an important power in the nation. His views on foreign policy, had they prevailed in the past, would have had momentous consequences. He is still wedded to those views and the chief moral of his tale is an apologia and defense of them. They are of primary concern to me and should be to all Americans regardless of their differences on domestic economic issues.

On these economic issues I am closer to Galbraith than most of his critics. I am still an unreconstructed advocate of the welfare state who believes its waywardness and abuses can be corrected. Nonetheless, to me the basic issue of our time is not capitalism or socialism in any of their variants and combinations but the defense of the open society against totalitarianism.

As a commentary on our political history since the thirties, Galbraith's book is absorbing, in places highly amusing, and fiercely partisan. Galbraith never forgets a slight nor a compliment. In many ways he confirms Auden's rueful comment on my "Ethics of Controversy": To abide by them

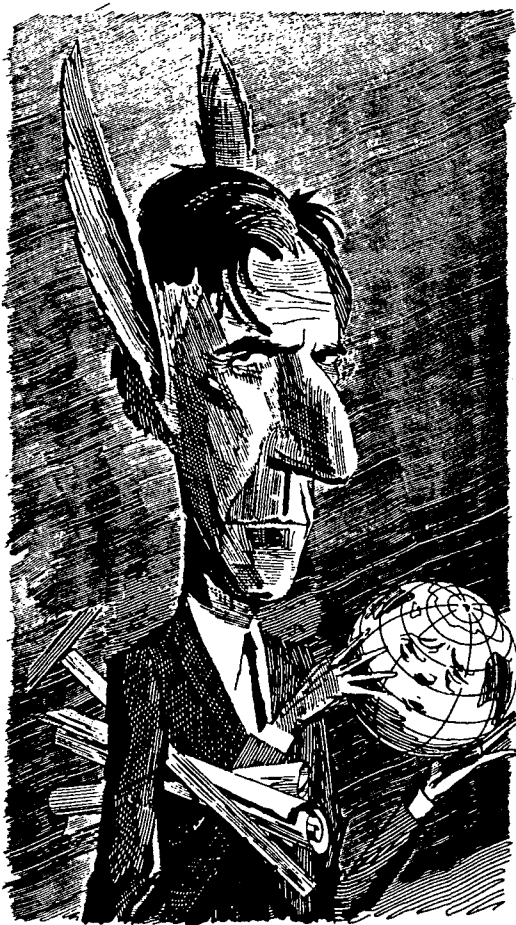
ruins the aesthetics of controversy. But some of his malicious comments are sparked not by memory of conflict but only of friendly disagreement. Thus his characterization of Bernard Baruch as a "name dropper" seems unfair. Baruch personally knew the persons in high places whose names he mentions at least as well as Galbraith knew those whose names in far greater number stud his pages. And to imply that Baruch's friendly telephone calls before the appearance of his *Autobiography* was to insure a favorable review is hardly justified. It makes one wonder why Galbraith goes out of his way to praise, and sometimes to withhold expected criticism of, some of his colleagues. Those who stood in the way of his promotion or hold economic views at variance

with his, get it in the neck without a convincing exposure or refutation of their positions. This is no great fault in a work of journalism—and Galbraith is indisputably a brilliant journalist—but rather a drawback in the serious analysis of ideas and policies. And Galbraith's great public conceit is that he is a profound and original thinker.

As a journalist one of Galbraith's important contributions to the gaiety of the nation is the exhumation of optimistic predictions and assurances of bigwigs on the eve of disaster. This is a valuable and much neglected public service particularly with reference to the records of economists and military men who have profited from what Galbraith calls "our system of upward failure"—reward and promotion despite their miserable batting averages. He takes pains, in order to claim an intellectual humility he does not feel, to document some minor errors of economic and electoral prediction of his own. But on some matters of momentous significance like his celebration of the economic success of the Chinese Communist economy, then in the throes of the Cultural Revolution, he suffers a lapse of memory. Like so many other memoirists whom he reproves, Galbraith has his own historical dustbin.

There is an interesting passage in the volume that possibly accounts for this. "After a lifetime in public service† self-censorship becomes not only automatic but a permanent part of one's personality. Only in the most infrequent cases can there be escape for autobiography or memoir. And what passes thus for candor is only a minor loosening of the chains . . ."

One senses this absence of candor in the account of his switch in 1960 from Stevenson to Kennedy at a time when Stevenson's prospects of winning the presidency



*Houghton Mifflin, \$16.95.

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†I have substituted the word "service" for "office" because Galbraith tells us that he had come to think of himself as part of the permanent government of the United States.

were excellent without the necessity of Cook County electoral larceny. I still remember Agnes Meyer's blazing fury at Galbraith's "opportunism" and "betrayal" in attaching himself to the Kennedy clan whose reputation for liberalism at the time was not high, and what she said about the hardly more contained indignation of Eleanor Roosevelt, and the deep hurt rather than anger of Stevenson himself. Although Galbraith was aware of this feeling among Stevenson supporters, he shrugs it off without really explaining why as a *liberal* he switched. His appetite for power whetted by his experience during the war years had grown in the period he was out of government service to a point where it overcame his fidelity to liberal principle. He rationalized this to himself and others by saying that Stevenson was a "born loser."

Even more mysterious in such a highly principled man and one who rather smugly proclaims his inveterate tendency to be "compulsively against any self-satisfied elite," and "to oppose and infuriate" the well-heeled, is his undeviating loyalty to the Kennedys. J. F. Kennedy in his campaign speeches irresponsibly attacked the Eisenhower administration for not actively supporting the Cuban freedom fighters—which was tantamount to a call for invasion. After his election he approved the ill-advised and ineptly planned Bay of Pigs imbroglio—mistakes that could only have been retrieved by American air support, cancelled after Kennedy's failure of nerve. Galbraith tells us now that he vehemently opposed all these moves except the last. But he did not go public with his opposition or resign in protest as he should have done.

His memory fails him when he writes about Robert Kennedy to whom he would have undoubtedly transferred his allegiance from Eugene McCarthy at the 1968 convention had Kennedy not been assassinated. He is silent about Robert Kennedy's role in Joseph McCarthy's rampage, and his wire-taps when Attorney General on Martin Luther King and others.

Most puzzling of all is Galbraith's undeviating support of the hero of Chappaquiddick whom he regards after George McGovern as possibly "my closest friend in politics." This is indeed passing strange for such a stern moralist for whom Nixon's character, despite Galbraith's enthusiasm for his policy of détente and the opening towards China, unfit him for any public office, even that of lowly dogcatcher. Nixon was certainly foolish beyond words and his political villainies, albeit flowing from an excess of personal loyalty to subordinates and political partisanship, are reprehensible. But if character is relevant to politics what act of Nixon's begins to compare in infamy, moral cowardice, and deception with that of Edward Kennedy's? And as for cover-ups, what act of Nixon's was as degrading as the bribe to the parents of the victim of Chappaquiddick to forbid an

autopsy whose findings might have raised the question of whether what occurred, that is, the delay in getting help and reporting what happened, was purely an accident? Conscious decision by Galbraith not unconscious censorship operates here, not only in the failure to make even passing mention of the incident but in not informing the reader what advice, if any, Galbraith gave at the time.

All this is relatively minor save as an illustration of how the double standard in morals and politics pervades Galbraith's memoir. Much more significant to the serious reader is the theme song that runs through the book with respect to the mischievous role American concern with Communism has had on our foreign policy. It is this topical theme which deserves closer attention.

II

Galbraith is convinced that the bane of American foreign policy since the end of World War II has been its obsessive anti-Communism. It threatens to end the world in a nuclear holocaust. American statesmen have been rendered both foolish and bellicose out of fear of being considered "soft" on Communism by those who are rhetorically "hard." Communism constitutes no danger in the United States nor to the United States. All the Communist powers want are safe borders. Integral to the debilitating syndrome of the anti-Communist complex that has gripped American statesmen from the onset of the cold war is that the Communist movement is a monolithic world organization driven by an unchanging ideology which has inspired its zealots everywhere to engage in conspiratorial practices. The result is that we have done more harm to ourselves than to our reputed enemies. Although the original architects of this disastrous policy are long dead, Galbraith is convinced that their spirits have poisoned the minds of the current inhabitant of the White House and his advisors. (Party loyalty prevents him from seeing that a better case can be made

for finding the roots of the current attitude in Truman's belated policy of containment than in the actions of Eisenhower and Dulles.)

It is this bitter attack on current and past American foreign policy with respect to the Soviet Union and Communism that is likely to have the greatest influence on uninformed readers. It varies little from the position of those like former Secretary of State Vance and his advisors, Marshal Shulman et al., who believe that the Soviet Union, far from being a threat to the United States, feels threatened and insecure by its "failures" in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and that the invasion of Afghanistan is a sign of Soviet "weakness." Galbraith does not yet go as far as George Kennan who has abandoned advocacy of the policy of containment for Bertrand Russell's position—"Rather Red, than Dead"—if an arms agreement cannot be negotiated. There are suggestions, however, towards the close of the book, that this may soon be Galbraith's view, too. Were he consistent, it would be because on his theory of convergence, as we shall see, technology not ideology determines our future under any system, and the technological imperatives of Communism and capitalism as industrial systems are the same.

Before addressing myself to this criticism of American foreign policy, I should like to challenge two assumptions that invariably attend Galbraith's exposition of it. The first, relatively minor, is his attempt to preempt the designation of "liberal" for his position in which he is abetted by some stupid conservatives. The only sense of the term "liberal" that would justify such presumption is one that defines liberalism as the belief that there are no enemies to human freedom on "the Left"—often a euphemistic expression for Communism. This kind of liberalism is always anti-Fascist but more often *anti* anti-Communist than anti-Communist.

The foreign policy Galbraith and his confrères are attacking is the foreign policy more strongly advocated by the liberal, organized labor movement in the United States (the AFL-CIO) than by any group of plutocratic monopolists and/or free marketers on the scene. Yet Galbraith mistakenly attributes the chief opposition to the Communist movement to big business which notoriously has been more interested in trade with Communist countries than have the trade unions. It is the same foreign policy defended by men like Adolf Berle, Paul Douglas, Reinhold Niebuhr, and scores of others whose liberal credentials are as long standing and every whit as authentic as Galbraith's. To be sure, this has no bearing on the validity of the policy but it is sufficient to expose—nothing can apparently limit—the patronizing arrogance of the assumption that where Galbraith stands, even in his call for quota



systems and reverse discrimination, the liberal flag waves.

More serious is the factual error that United States foreign policy, of which I have often been a critic for reasons quite different from those of Galbraith, has taken as axiomatic the monolithic character of the international Communist movement. Even under Truman, despite the fact that Tito's Yugoslavia was ideologically the most intransigent and aggressive of the Communist states, the United States was quick to offer economic and military assistance to Belgrade after the Tito-Stalin rift. The development of polycentrism was a slow process in the Communist world, and the United States was not unduly tardy in recognizing it. It may be true that Kim Il Sung decided on his own to invade South Korea after Acheson had gratuitously declared it outside the confines of the American national interest. But once the invasion was launched, North Korea could not have continued to wage the war against the U. S. and UN resistance without the active collaboration of the Soviet Union and Communist China. The worldwide campaign against the United States that circulated the monstrous lie that the U. S. was waging germ warfare in Korea was initiated and orchestrated by the Kremlin.

And now that the United States has decided to play the China card in a very modest opening in order to restrain the current expansionist tendency of the Soviet Union, Galbraith and other appeasers deplore the move as a dangerous provocation even as they continue to indict American policy for its "mindless" assumption that the world Communist movement is monolithic. Actually, there is a good precedent in United States policy for helping, in the national interest and the ultimate cause of freedom, one form of totalitarianism resist another, about which we hear little from human rights absolutists, namely, United States military and economic aid to the Kremlin after Hitler double-crossed his erstwhile ally and invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Such aid, under existing law, would not have been possible then.

Of course it is fatuous to contrast "hard" and "soft" attitudes towards Communism. Nor do I recall any policy being accepted or rejected by leading American statesmen in these terms despite Galbraith's assertion that their use was systematic. All American political figures, including Henry Wallace and George McGovern, have been *against* Communism. But that is not enough to develop "intelligent" and avoid "unintelligent" policies resisting it. "Intelligent" and "unintelligent" are the only appropriate epithets to apply in considering alternatives of policy, not "hard" or "soft." Although knowledge of Communist theory and practice is certainly no guarantee of wisdom here, that is, of developing an intelligent policy, ignorance of Communist theory and practice almost invariably

results in unintelligent policies, policies, for example, that assume that since Communists are just as human as we are, their foreign policy is therefore motivated by the same considerations as those of other non-Communist states, or that since they are Russians, their foreign policy must therefore be a continuation of czarist foreign policy. Granting that Communists behave like human beings, and that they behave like Russians, too (or Chinese, as the case may be), the question is: Do they behave like Communists? Those who are ignorant of the theory and practice of Communism cannot answer this question. Note that even if one believes that the rulers of the Soviet Union behave like Communists, this does not mean that they behave *only* as Communists or *always* as Communists. Ideology is not everything. But it certainly is not nothing as the history of our century shows.

Although I found it difficult to believe, I have reluctantly concluded, on the strength of this book and some others of his writings, that Galbraith really is innocent of knowledge of the theory and practice of Communism. For him Communism is purely an economic system in which private property in the instruments of social production has been abolished. On this view, the only individuals who are obsessively hostile to it are those who mainly live on profit, rent, and interest, and who sense in the intrusion of government into economic life the ultimate

take-over of the system of collectivism. Galbraith has no notion of what the dictatorship of the proletariat means in Communist theory and practice, of the dictatorship of the party as the necessary and only means of carrying it out, and of the theory and practice of democratic centralism which insures the dictatorship of the Political Committee of the Communist Party to oversee and enforce the political, cultural, social, and intellectual orthodoxy of the members of the Communist Party and of the entire population over whom they rule. In short, Communism as a system of totalitarianism is beyond his ken. One may doubt whether totalitarianism as an "ideal type" in Weber's sense exists anywhere in the world. Neither does democracy. But the existing differences in one type or another, and the possibility that under certain historical conditions one may be transformed into the other, do not preclude the proper use of the designation.

My reasons for concluding that Galbraith lacks understanding of the nature of Communism are varied. Before detailing them I must confess that the conclusion is a blow to my vanity. In 1952 as one of the organizers of Stevenson's campaign, Galbraith asked me through Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (the suggestion, I was told, originated with John Macdonald, a former colleague of Galbraith's at *Fortune*) to write two speeches on Communism for Stevenson. Not only were they not used, they were apparently unread (perhaps they were lost in the mail).

The most striking of Galbraith's assessments of a Communist society is to be found in his book *China Passage* published after his visit to mainland China in 1972. It is odd that although large chunks of his other volumes are reproduced or summarized in this memoir there is no reference to the book in its pages or a revaluation of its judgments in the perspective of later years. Galbraith was in China while "the cultural revolution" was still raging, when its economy was crippled, its universities paralyzed, and the manifold terrors of the Chinese Gulag Archipelago pervasive in most areas. Nonetheless he reported to the world that China's economic system is "highly effective," that it "functions easily and well," with a performance rivaling Japan's. (The true state of affairs, economic as well as political in China at that time, or at any time, could have easily been learned by talking to recent refugees in Hong Kong—especially those who fled to avoid religious persecution and who had no political axe to grind.) Feasting on the elaborate, exotic *haute cuisine* in a succession of banquets the Chinese lay on for distinguished visitors—just like those the Kremlin provided for visiting Western dignitaries during the famine of the early thirties—Galbraith does not in so many words say that the general population ate as well but implies that it was well fed—despite the suspicious absence, noted



by one of his companions, of any cats or dogs. To Galbraith's credit he forbears mentioning the absence of flies in China. But neither does he note anywhere the absence of freedom except in a Pickwickian sense. He has a peripheral consciousness of some oppression but it is the easy and satisfactory functioning of the economy that impresses him most. "Dissidents are brought firmly into line in China but one suspects with great politeness." And why does he suspect this? Because his Chinese hosts invariably smiled at him. He actually writes that the Chinese "command with a smile." No one was ever a more willing and self-deluded victim of skillful Chinese Potemkins. He has an appreciative eye for the aesthetic delights of the countryside but seems blind in both eyes to the totalitarian character of every social landscape. He prefers not to stress the drab unisex uniforms of Chinese adults in order to point up the brightly attired five-year-olds. He remains silent about the educational and cultural significance of these children pirouetting and celebrating with Mao's little Red Book in their tiny hands.

His final pronouncement: "For the Chinese, the system works . . . It is the Chinese future." We may not like it nor the French. The Chinese do. It is a pity Galbraith does not tell us how he knows that the Chinese like it. When did they choose it? The only choice the Chinese have had since the Communists took over was when the Chinese prisoners of war, after the Korean conflict, were given an opportunity to return home or go elsewhere. Despite the bullying of their Indian interviewers, the great majority chose the bitter bread of exile. When the Communist Chinese officials lifted the bamboo curtain for a few days, they hurriedly dropped it lest Southern China be depopulated.

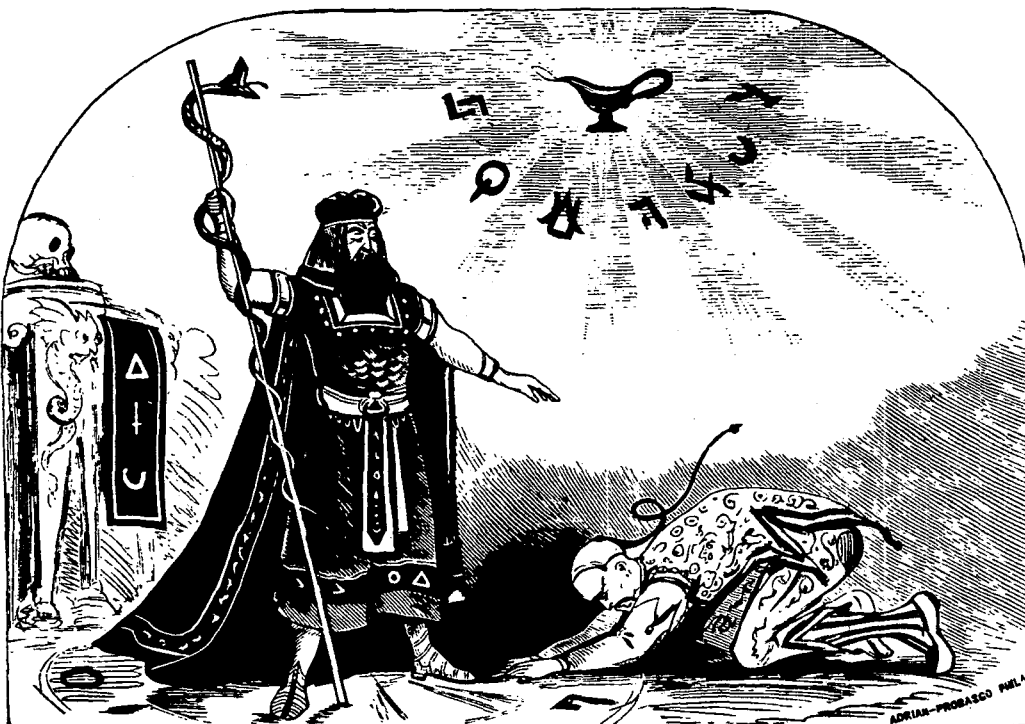
Galbraith's insensitiveness to the totalitarian character of Communism is a corollary of his theory of convergence

according to which the society and culture of the future are determined by the technological imperatives of large-scale industrial organization. He denies therefore that there is much sense in defining the world conflict as one between capitalism and Communism as economic systems or especially between democracy and totalitarianism. All the palaver about free enterprise is so much hokum or what Thurman Arnold, who long ago recognized Galbraith's economic genius loyally reciprocated by Galbraith, called "folk lore." And as for Marxism-Leninism, and all its variants, that is so much theology whose chilling language imperialists and militarists, and their academic hirelings, often cite out of context to increase appropriations. Denounce totalitarianism as one pleases. It cannot survive, according to Galbraith, where we have large industrial organization "that sustains technology, and the nature of the planning that technology requires." Celebrate democracy as one pleases, the same technological imperatives "impose a measure of discipline . . . of subordination of the individual to the organization which is very much less than the individualism that has been properly identified with the Western economy." We can now understand how anachronistic free trade unionism is in the new industrial state! Galbraith sees no threat to his abiding liberalism in the convergent tendencies of industrial societies which result in oligarchies both in Communist and capitalist societies. "Ideology is not the relevant force." In 1966 to make this simplistic technological determinism more palatable he predicted that the Soviet Union "will necessarily [*sic*] introduce greater political and cultural freedom" (*New York Times*, December 18, 1966). Why this did not occur in the new industrial states of Germany and Japan he does not explain. Actually, political and cultural conditions in the Soviet Union since Galbraith made this prediction have worsened but he still clings to his

simplistic technological determinism that would have shamed Howard Scott, the father of the technology movement. On his theory, why should the Soviet Union become like the West rather than the West become like the Soviet Union since ideology is irrelevant and technology is decisive? Anyone who believes, as Galbraith does, the proposition that "technical specialization cannot be reconciled with intellectual regimentation," to use one of his favorite expressions, is capable of believing anything. The proposition is demonstrably false—historically, psychologically, and politically. Technology makes certain ideal uses possible, it does not determine them. He obviously has not pondered the moral of the Nobel Peace Foundation. Galbraith falls below the level of a sophisticated Marxism in failing to realize that human ideals, which are always at the heart of an ideology broadly conceived, cannot be reduced to economic or technological equations of the first or any degree.

A cognate failure to grasp the animating ideals of Communism as a movement grasping for power by any means is evidenced in his discussion of the Vietnam war. Here, too, there is a hard and fast treatment of the facts. The theme is too complex for exhaustive or even adequate analysis here. Suffice it to say that the initial error of the United States was not to bring pressure on France, as it did on the Netherlands with respect to Indonesia, to live up to de Gaulle's war-time pledge to give Vietnam independence. It was imprudent to get involved in an area so distant but it is false that the United States was seeking to impose its own way of life on a foreign nation. It was Adlai Stevenson who stated the true issue on the day of his death. "My hope in Vietnam is that resistance there may establish the fact that changes in Asia are not to be precipitated by outside force. That was the point of the Korean War. This is the point of the conflict in Vietnam." It was the same point that led the United States government to condemn and therefore reverse the war of England, France, and Israel against Egypt a decade earlier. This was during the very week in which the Soviet Union invaded Hungary to suppress with ruthless bloodshed the indigenous political development of a government formed, according to the words of George Lukács at the time, "to represent every shade and stratum of the Hungarian people that wants peace and socialism."

Once the United States became involved, given the ineptness of the military, the hostility of the media which turned the defeat of the Viet Cong Tet offensive into a psychological and political victory, and the political constraints on military operations, the real question was how to get out of Vietnam without inviting horrible excesses on a population unwilling to accept



Freischütz has a single virtue: It is not apologetic (which is more than can be said for the New York City Opera's grudging brochure copy advertising this fall's première of the opera in a new translation by

Andrew Porter). All the same, any reading that makes the score accessible to new generations is rendering some kind of service. In time they may grow more discerning and demand better. For certain

it is that Kubelik's foursquare interpretation does not deserve to be deemed the performance of record. Unlike Weber's masterpiece, it is not for all time, but for a day. □

John Nollson

THE SOVIET BULL MARKET

Financial markets reacted calmly to the news that the Federal Reserve Board had filed a tender offer to acquire all outstanding shares of the Soviet Union (SOVUNCORP). The Fed, which arranged a multi-billion dollar line of credit to finance its takeover bid, seemed well on its way to pulling off the deal of the century.

One reason the markets have indeed remained calm is that they perceive, to the extent that markets perceive, of course, the logic of it all. Analysts had noticed an impressive run-down in the price of SOVUN common; given the rise of the dollar and recent Soviet setbacks on the world scene, SOVUNCORP is trading at its lowest price in the last ten years and shrewd money managers know it.

The main computer of the Federal Reserve Board, which, as good luck would have it, is housed in a building not a stone's throw from the Department of State, spent the last week crunching out the numbers. It is a curious coincidence, but a demonstrable fact nonetheless, that all the equity of SOVUNCORP is equal to exactly five weeks' worth of M 1-b. Accordingly, the Fed managed to filch a bit from each week's M 1-b in order to build up its war chest. Ever imaginative and alert, and always open to new business opportunities, the Fed has now decided to make its move. "It's O.K. with the SEC, so it's O.K. with us," one Fed bigwig is reported to have said.

Now, as everyone knows, these awesome financial raids invariably begin with a huge newspaper advertisement. Unfortunately, the Fed's attempt to buy a double full-page spread in *Pravda* was met with a stern rebuff by the present directors of SOVUNCORP. Some suspect their surliness can be attributed to the low price offered; others tend to the view that it is their unfamiliarity with modern business practices which, for the moment, has caused them to be a bit standoffish. "We've gone over the tax

advantages of our proposal with them for the umpteenth time, but they still don't seem to get it," said one Fed tax counselor with a sigh. "But we're going to continue to educate them."

In the meantime, it has been necessary to reach shareholders through the transmitters of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. On the hour, Fed-sponsored broadcasts explain in patient detail how shareholders can forward their proxies to the sinking fund agent and acquisition managers in New York City. It is, in sum, the most dramatic application of free enterprise principles to the management of foreign policy that we have seen in a long time.

As we remember, the Fed had sharpened its skills in the famous proxy battle for control of DENGINC, a wholly owned subsidiary of St. Mao Minerals in Peking. St. Mao had been built up over the past forty years until it had become the largest publicly owned company in the world. Yet the heirs could not agree about the disposition of the assets after the founder died; in fact, there was a lot of family squabbling involving the widow, the children, and a bunch of disgruntled

nieces, nephews, and cousins. So no one was surprised when SOVUNCORP tried to expand its international holdings by acquiring some of the stock. But the Fed came back with an offer of \$72 per share which the capital-starved headquarters of SOVUNCORP simply could not meet. A year later, the Fed's acquisition of Bulgarian Interfund passed almost without notice. SOVUNCORP, of course, continued to speculate in precious metals, as a hedge against the day when the United States finally returns to the gold standard. "They've taken a drubbing on the Peking Bourse and they'll be licking their wounds for the rest of the century," said one analyst who pays attention to these things.

Experts differ over the likely result of the Fed's latest takeover bid. No one doubts that we ought to do whatever it is we do best, but skeptics recall similar attempts to place Americans on the board of directors of SOVUNCORP with disappointing results; they were never allowed to vote their shares.

America's other forte, aside from mergers and acquisitions, is instant photography. Not even the Japanese can do it. If, for some reason, the Fed does not pull off its financial coup, there is a backup plan waiting in the wings. The Polaroid Corporation has been commissioned to build a giant SX-70, one hundred and ten feet long, forty feet wide, and weighing seven tons. Once the camera is placed in orbit, specially trained astronauts, including James Garner, will shuttle up to the machine and push an enormous red button several times. Huge color pictures of the Earth below will be automatically dispensed and they will develop themselves in less than fifteen seconds. The cheaper plan will rely on Kodak to orbit its cranking camera, though it will take at least two astronauts to turn the handle. But either way, we shall be able to see exactly what it is we are trying to buy. □





ANTINUCLEAR MALPRACTICE

by Petr Beckmann

Though the media moguls would have us think otherwise, there is a strong case to be made for nuclear power on moral grounds.

True, there are other considerations: reliability, economy, and the virtually unlimited domestic fuel supplies it can provide. But strong as they may be, they have not persuaded those whose moral objections to the health hazards of nuclear power take precedence over all other considerations.

The bitter irony of their attitude is that it should be an argument for nuclear power, not against it. For the moral case for nuclear power is simply this: The price paid in human suffering—in deaths, injuries, diseases, and environmental impact—for a unit of electrical energy is far lower for nuclear power than for any other source of electricity yet invented. Each megawatt of nuclear electric capacity will significantly reduce—albeit not to zero—the health hazards that would be posed by a megawatt of fossil-fired or hydro-power (let alone dilute, "soft" sources).

After the almost daily barrage by the antinuclear establishment, this last statement may seem outrageous; but it is one that could be easily, immediately, and devastatingly refuted were it not true. Yet when did you last see any figures on the dead, injured, and diseased per billion megawatt-hours of electric energy, and how were the victims divided among the various fuels?

These figures are not unknown; they have simply been ignored. The antinukes do not seriously dispute the fact that nuclear power reduces the health hazards of generating electricity; they just conceal it and evade comparisons.

Here is a little sample of the annual human price paid for the electric power produced by a standard (1,000

MW) power plant when the entire fuel cycle is considered:

Fuel	Deaths	Disabilities
coal	20-300	100-300
oil	2-300	90-180
gas	0-2	20
nuclear	1-3	7-40

Unfair? Ignores the possibility of major accidents? Then take a look at some of the non-nuclear disasters that have occurred since nuclear electric power first came into existence:

Cause of Disaster	Place	Deaths
coal smoke	London 1952	3,900
fuel gas explosion	Tarragona, Spain 1979	140
oil rig accident	North Sea 1980	123
dam failure	Vaionte, Italy 1962	2,000
dam failure	Morvi, India 1979	3,000

Or consider: There are five dams in the United States, each of which could kill more than 100,000 people on failure (no plutonium needed to blow them up).

There are good *inherent* reasons, not just strict regulation, why nuclear

power is far safer than any other source of electricity, and the interested reader will find them elsewhere.* My purpose here is to discuss a smaller, related point: the activities of a handful of physicians who, by opposing nuclear power generation, oppose the *reduction* of health hazards.

One may immediately ask: If nuclear power is a significant boon for public health, why do physicians not speak out in favor of it?

They do; they just don't get the same publicity as Jane Fonda's lectures on public health. The American Medical Association asked its Council of Scientific Affairs in 1976 to investigate the relative health hazards of various power sources; it produced its report two years later, and found what the British government, the Brookhaven National Laboratory, and every other serious scientist found; the first table above is, in fact, taken from the AMA report. The California Medical Association,

which had initially spoken out against nuclear power, re-examined the question at its San Diego meeting in February 1980 and unanimously reversed its previous stand. Even the Health Physics Society, which is dedicated to the study of radiation and to the protection of man and the environment against its harmful effects, has come out in favor of nuclear power.

Indeed, the vast majority of informed medical opinion and its official organizations endorse nuclear power for its reduction of health hazards. Most physicians of course have not studied the relative hazards of generating electric power, nor should they be expected to examine this somewhat esoteric issue. But because uninformed, these physicians have the good sense not to voice any opinion on the subject and the intelligence, usually, to ask the crucial question "Compared to what?" when the health hazards of nuclear power are presented in isolation.

There remains, however, that small corps of antinuclear physicians. Now a doctor, like anyone else, has a right to be wrong (if, indeed, he *is* wrong). There were once doctors vehemently opposed to inoculation against smallpox, to disinfectants, even to anesthetics. This kind of doctor, though, would voice his objections in professional meetings and journals, in the course of the normal search and struggle for scientific truth. His interest was in medicine, not ideology; and even if opposed to inoculations or surgery on religious grounds, he would usually state his motivation openly without papering over his beliefs with medical arguments.

But the physicians at issue here are of a different ilk: They engage in medical activities or voice medical opinions with the authority of a physician, when in fact these activities and opinions are rooted solely in ideology and untested in the accepted forums of medicine and science. Some of their propaganda is merely misleading; some is outright and dramatically false.



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Among the merely misleading statements is Dr. John Gofman's court testimony that "there is no known amount of radioactivity that can be proclaimed safe." The statement is, in a sense, true: There is indeed no known amount, just as there is no known amount of knee-bends that can be proclaimed impossible to produce heart attacks, or no known amount of arsenic that can be proclaimed safe in drinking water (both arsenic and radioactivity, however, do occur in drinking water, and the permissible amounts of both are standardized and regulated). What Gofman does not tell the layman he seeks to intimidate is that he himself is radioactive due to the potassium 40 in his, and everybody else's, blood (he is, in other words, telling us that there is no amount of blood that can be proclaimed safe for its owner); or that Coloradans are exposed to 5,000 nuclear plants' worth of radioactivity above the level they would receive in Florida (where the cancer incidence is more than twice as high); or that coal-fired plants release up to 50 times as much radioactivity as nuclear plants; or that the lion's share of man-made radioactivity in the environment comes from medical equipment, including the radio-isotopes used in highly beneficial and lifesaving nuclear medicine.

Gofman's assertion is the old trick of telling the truth, but not the whole truth; it would be just as true to aver that the only reason why he has not yet been arrested for peddling heroin is that the evidence against him is, as of this writing, insufficient to guarantee conviction.

George Wald's statement that "every little bit of radioactivity hurts," though similar, is in a different class. In itself, it is probably false; no human has ever been without radioactivity, so that it is the absence, not the presence, of "a little bit of radioactivity" that would be abnormal.

But that is not the point. Wald made the statement on TV, standing in front of the Three Mile Island plant in the days when the antinuclear hysteria was being fanned to fever pitch because a nuclear plant had done what it was supposed to do, shut itself down without hurting anybody when its vast power went out of control. He was introduced to his audience as a Harvard professor and Nobel Prize winner in physiology and medicine.

Now Wald is indeed a Harvard professor (of biology) and a winner of a Nobel Prize (in the utterly unrelated field of color vision and physiology of the retina); but his statements would be shocking even if they were not

made by a Nobel Prize winner.

Wald reveals only his political thinking when he charges that "scientists who attest to the safety of nuclear power have all been bought" or that "these superb realists, the American insurance companies, refused to support nuclear plants from the beginning" or when he attributes the accident-free record of the U.S. nuclear navy to the fact that the navy "is not run for profit." This, after all, comes from a man who has embraced every cause of the radical Left, including a trip to Tehran to condemn the United States at a "human rights" conference organized by the Iranians while they were holding the American hostages.

Nevertheless, laymen may well be taken in by seemingly scientific, quantitative statements by a Nobel Prize winner; as when Wald asserts: "Plutonium is perhaps the most toxic substance known—if you were to inhale a milligram, you would be dead of massive fibrosis of the lung within hours."

This is nonsense. Plutonium is indeed toxic—a milligram of it is a little more toxic than caffeine, the stimulant in coffee, when ingested, and a little less than naturally occurring radium when inhaled. It is billions and trillions of times less toxic than some chemical and biological poisons. As for fibrosis of the lungs, Wald has no direct way of knowing how much plutonium will cause fibrosis; the only experiments on this point were made by the Batelle NW Laboratories in Hanford and published in 1969-70. Of the 100 dogs that had inhaled plutonium, those that had inhaled the equivalent of one milligram were still alive a year later and eventually died of causes other than fibrosis (at the time of the report, six to nine years after exposure, 75 of the 100 dogs were still alive). Nobel Prize winner Wald's data appear to be concocted.

It is debatable whether a man shouting "Fire!" in a crowded theater could inflict as much damage as did Professor Wald by his statements at TMI; quite obviously he shares responsibility for the only ill-effects on health that the Kemeny and other commissions investigating Three Mile Island could find—the severe mental stress of the population.

Like Wald, the aforementioned Gofman is often considered more trustworthy because he has a degree not only in medicine, but also in physics—which only makes his distortions that much more bizarre. Curiously, Gofman is probably the

only leading antinuke who does not oppose nuclear bombs, but explicitly approves of them as effective weapons. In other matters, however, he is no less vicious than the antinukes without scientific training. When Dr. Bernard Cohen, professor of physics at the University of Pittsburgh, produced figures to show that Gofman's unfounded estimate of plutonium releases was in error by a factor of more than 10,000, Gofman shot back: "It is more amusing than anything else to see the ranting and raving of a Bernard Cohen. . . . Scientists interested in grants do not have to have a picture drawn out for them what kind of results are required by their sponsors. They are only too willing to oblige."

Gofman appears to be the only one among our doctors against health who has not totally stonewalled the issue of alternative health hazards, though his attitude on the point only reveals greater irrationality. In response to a challenge recently posed by Arizona physician Dr. Jane Orient, he produced a tedious calculation based on the uranium in coal which overlooked some vital points and essentially proved that for the same power generated, a nuclear plant will (surprise!) burn more uranium than a coal-fired plant. Yes, you read right: What this ex-scientist proved is that coal-fired plants burn less uranium than nuclear plants.

Besides, says he, you are barking up the wrong tree if you suspect him of being a friend of coal. He does not approve of one form of "random murder" more than of another. He opposes nuclear power, and he opposes fossil-fired power; what he does not oppose is the use of electricity.

"As for the estimates of the AMA Council of Scientific Affairs on the mortality-risk from generating electricity by various fuels," says Gof-



man in another of his deeply reasoned arguments, "they are totally worthless." And thus stand corrected (or ignored) the world's scientific bodies by this lone voice; for the other antinuclear voices, shrill as they may be, remain silent on this all-important moral issue. "At least several hundred scientists trained in the bio-medical aspects of nuclear energy—myself definitely included—are candidates for Nuremberg-type trials for crimes against humanity," concludes Gofman.

Then there is Dr. Helen Caldicott, who makes this last point more subtly: "The scientists who work for nuclear power and nuclear energy have sold their soul to the devil. They're either dumb, stupid or highly compromised."

Dr. Caldicott makes frequent appearances on campuses and in women's magazines. Her speeches describe babies dying at the hospital where she used to work, victims of the radiation emitted by nuclear power plants. Her allegations betray an ignorance not only of elementary physics and engineering ("If the cooling stops working, the whole reactor core melts right down through the bottom of the reactor, half a mile into the earth. . . . A tremendous amount of steam will be liberated. It will blow the reactor container vessel apart and the radiation of a thousand Hiroshima-type bombs will escape. . . . Thousands of people would die instantly. Two weeks later, thousands more would die from what's called acute radiation sickness. . . ."), but of medicine as well:

- "We're talking about a substance (plutonium) that is so incredibly toxic that everybody who comes in contact with it and gets it into their lungs will die of lung cancer." [In an accident during the World War II Manhattan Project, 25 workers received a high multiple of the permissible plutonium lung burden; 23 of them are still alive and in good health, the other two died of unrelated causes—not lung cancer.]

- "If a baby drinks milk with radioactive iodine in it, it gets absorbed through the gut, goes up the thyroid gland in the neck, where it concentrates, and it irradiates just a few cells, and that child may get thyroid cancer." [All babies drink milk with radioactive iodine in it—there is no other milk. International standards recommend that action be taken (e.g., dairy cattle be put on dry feed) when the radiation of iodine in the milk exceeds about 0.03 microcuries per pint; the radioiodine given in thyroid examinations to healthy pa-

tients amounts to about 100 microcuries, and up to 30,000 microcuries is given in therapy to patients with cancer of the thyroid. These amounts range, respectively, from some 3,000 times to a million times more microcuries than are released by the radioactive iodine in a pint of milk after an emergency has been declared. Dr. Caldicott could have obtained this information from any radiologist, including the one to whom she is married.]

• "All radiation is dangerous; no radiation is safe," she parrots Gofman's theme, but with an added twist: "If you live in Australia, you sunbathe and you surf. We have one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world because we are exposed to the sun." [Sun-induced skin cancer is due to ultraviolet radiation, which is non-ionizing and has nothing to do with radioactivity or the cancers caused by it. It is a common and usually easily curable type of cancer; its high incidence in Australia is not simply due to exposure to the sun—which is much greater in other countries—but to the lack of protective pigments in the skin of a white population living at low geographic latitudes, where the UV-absorbing

layers of the atmosphere are thinner.]

And so on—we are nowhere near the end of the nonsense in the one article from which the above was culled, let alone her numerous other prattlings. And there are many more doctors we lack the space for. There is Dr. Carl Johnson, Health Officer of Jefferson County, Colorado (where the Rocky Flats weapons plant is located), whose absurd statistics on cancers purportedly caused by plutonium had the rare, perhaps unique, distinction of being rebuked by a Carterite EPA; or Dr. Sidney Wolf of Ralph Nader's Health Research Group, who finds antinuclear alarmism more important than protecting people's lives from fires—he condemns smoke detectors using "dangerous radioactivity," though if he wore one on top of a dunce's hat, it would give him a smaller dose than he gets from his own blood.

What, then, is the real point of the campaign against the cleanest and safest method of generating electricity?

Here, too, Helen Caldicott may provide an answer. She has given up watching babies die from the horrible

effects of nuclear power at a Boston hospital to become the full-time president of an organization of the radical Left; like other such organizations, it not only disposes over abundant funds, but engages in the usual hypocrisy in choosing its name—"Physicians for Social Responsibility." Last year she decided to shift the emphasis of her harangues from antinuclear to anti-defense causes, at a time when such a change was being recommended by the radical umbrella organization Mobilization for Survival and by the leftwingers' nerve center, the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. Her move was extolled by no less than *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*, those well-known standard bearers in the crusade to abolish all nuclear power plants and all nuclear bombs.

"Khelen Keldikott," to transliterate *Pravda's* spelling, told Soviet readers last December 1 that:

The USA has now accumulated an awesome quantity of nuclear bombs, but the Pentagon continues their production . . . Our politicians have long ago turned into obedient puppets of the military-industrial complex. . . . The noisy jabber about the "Soviet threat" begins every time the Pentagon adopts a new system

of mass annihilation into its arsenal. We have received a telegram from President Brezhnev in reply to our appeal to end the arms race. Soviet physicians immediately supported our movement.

Similar sentiments were voiced in the same article by other American physicians, Prof. Bernard Lown, G. King, and whoever "Dzh. Ratzens" is (Rutgens—Dzheffry, Dzheims, or Dzhordzh?).

Caldicott, who according to *Izvestiya* (July 30, 1980) visited Moscow as a member of the U.S. Peace Council (affiliated with the World Peace Council, one of the more transparent Soviet fronts) did not, of course, need much urging from the Mobilization for Survival to change the emphasis of her medical advice. For as she proclaimed to her *Pravda* readers: "Nuclear plants are synonymous with nuclear weapons."

But there is perhaps no irony more bitter than when this holder of a medical degree, sworn to her Hippocratic oath, concealer of the reduced health hazards of nuclear power, and disguiser of the deadly Soviet threat, writes in that same article: "I am here to look after people, to save people's lives, not to kill them." □



THE LUSH'S PARADISE

Russian drunkenness, one of the most classic and commonplace of subjects, is again attracting attention in connection with a startling new phenomenon of Soviet life. Over the past decade, infant mortality has increased sharply (by one-third between 1970 and 1975, reaching 35.6 per 1,000) and life expectancy has dropped. Infant mortality is three times greater than in Western Europe, and life expectancy is six years lower. Thus a superpower whose military potential is at least equal to, if not greater than, that of the United States, has a life span and infant mortality rate comparable to that of an underdeveloped country. But where-

Vladimir Solovyov, a Russian-born historian and journalist, has just completed a book, *Russian Paradoxes, in collaboration with his wife, Elena Klepikova.*

as the figures for the Third World are improving, for the Soviets they are getting worse—so much so, that in the mid-seventies data on infant mortality unexpectedly disappeared from the regular reports of the USSR Central Statistical Bureau.

American specialists, puzzled by the health crisis in the USSR, have been making all sorts of guesses as to its cause. But about one thing they can be certain: its traditional place in Russia notwithstanding, alcoholism in the past few decades has surged dramatically, with sales of alcohol five times what they were in the early fifties. (The average Soviet consumes twice as much alcohol as the average American, and America is not among the soberest of nations.) But even these figures are understated—probably very much so—since they do not take into account the production and consumption of moonshine

alcohol. It is distilled everywhere. Particularly spectacular is the rural landscape at night, with blue smoke rising from each hut. There are many recipes for moonshine, ranging from the primitive *sivukha*, or raw brandy, to *chacha*, a fiery plum brandy good enough to please the palate of any gourmand. But then Russian alcoholics are not really fastidious.

I specify "Russian" because, although there are no statistics on alcoholism broken down for the various Soviet nationalities, many other signs indicate that in this respect the Russians have moved well ahead of other Soviet peoples. Thus Russians, who constitute only 20 percent of the population of Georgia, include 80 percent of Georgia's registered alcoholics. In Estonia's capital city of Tallin, when the local inhabitants see a drunk staggering along the street, they have no dif-

ficulty guessing who he is: "That's our older brother." (In Stalin's terminology, the close-knit family of Soviet peoples is headed by the "older brother"—the Russian people.)

A drunk on the streets of Tallin is a rarity; but in the Urals city of Sverdlovsk you can hardly get into the city park in the summertime, what with all the drunks lying around. I have seen this myself, which is why I cite the example of Sverdlovsk instead of, say, Chelyabinsk where things would appear to be pretty much the same. According to Soviet statistics, about 40 percent of the drunks in Russia do their drinking on the streets or at entrances to buildings.* It's therefore

*Since drinking on a Russian scale at public establishments is forbidden by law, there are no great saloons in the Soviet Union. The prudent majority does most of its drinking at home.

not surprising that the greatest accumulation of drunks is usually to be found at bus stations and railroad terminals, near the liquor stores and food shops where with equal ease one can make a short-lived friendship or get into a fist fight.

But there is more to it than fisticuffs. According to recent statistics for the Gorky region (where Academician Sakharov is now living in exile), in one year alone drunks committed 100 percent of the area's premeditated homicides, 72.6 percent of its serious assaults, and 53 percent of its robberies. Figures for other areas of the USSR are not much different. In fact, one-fifth of all robberies committed in the USSR are of liquor stores.

Yes, drunkenness in Russia is practically universal, even among truck drivers (especially those on long runs), who devise various methods to conceal their drinking, including the chewing of nutmeg and coffee beans. Nor is it all that unusual for a pilot to fly an airplane while drunk. I once spent four hours on a local flight from Ochakov to Odessa—a flight that was supposed to take one hour. First we went far off course, to Kishinev in the Moldavian Republic. Eventually, we reached Odessa, but instead of landing at the civilian airport, we came down on the military airfield where the pilot had done duty before being transferred to Aeroflot for drunkenness. There, he was literally dragged out of the cockpit. He could still fly a plane (more or less), but he couldn't walk on his own two feet. But what can we say about truck drivers and pilots when the world's first astronaut, Yuri Gagarin, having come back safe and sound from space, flew a jet trainer while drunk and was killed when it crashed?

It is hard to say what people drink in the USSR; it is much easier to list what they *don't* drink. The government has managed to lower the quality of the vodka it produces (vodka for export is not available even to Muscovites) precisely because most of the drunks are not choosy. For example, watchmen in morgues drink the formalin that is supposed to be used for cadavers. Others drink eau de cologne, valerian, varnish, a glue called "B-F," and denatured alcohol.

I remember a tragic incident at a Leningrad plant where some workers discovered, on the side tracks, a tank car full of methyl alcohol. After the subsequent party, many of the workers went blind, and six died. Another time, I was in a store that sold kerosene and a young man brought in

a can, saying he wanted it filled with twenty liters of "skull and crossbones" (denatured alcohol). When asked why he wanted so much, he explained he was going to a wedding, but assured us: "It's for the men; the weaker sex will drink vodka."

Among the important changes on the map of Russian alcoholism is the sharp rise in drunkenness among women and children. According to

information from *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, a Moscow weekly, there has been an increase in the number of institutions for children with birth defects—especially those conceived during a binge. Soviet geneticists are disturbed not so much by the moral dissolution as by the degeneration of the Russian genotype. It is not just individuals but an entire nation that have become drunks, and one can

only imagine the effect this will have on future generations.

Are the leaders in the Kremlin worried by this? One American journalist asked me: "If Stalin could take away the peasants' land, cows, and pigs, isn't it obvious that he—or, today, Brezhnev—could have taken away the bottle as well?" But neither Stalin nor Brezhnev did, nor could they have done so—for many rea-

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sons. On the people's scale of values, the bottle is more valuable than land. One saying on the subject goes: "There's no bread, so let's drink booze." And another: "Trade your bread for booze and you'll have a happier life." Once the land was taken away, there was nothing to replace it. A confiscated bottle of vodka, however, can always be replaced by a bottle of moonshine. Even the restriction on the sale of strong spirits (60 proof and up) to daytime hours (11 a.m. to 7 p.m.) can easily be overcome with the help of the black market. A cab driver can get you a bottle of vodka at double the standard price any hour of the day or night. This is legitimate business, and the police wink at it.

What is really amazing, though, is not the black market but the fact that the government itself has gone around its own laws and begun selling a new kind of vodka, *Strelets-kaya* (58 proof), that you can buy any time a liquor store is open.

Why this inconsistency?

Alcohol is an important source of income for the state, and limiting its production would mean a serious blow to the economy. This is a kind of voluntary tax. In its perverse way the government uses it to finance medical care and education, and can always raise it under the guise of combatting drunkenness. (One liter of vodka now costs \$11; more than a day's wages.) The economic gain, however, could not possibly offset the moral and

physical damage wrought by alcoholism.

Here an important question arises: Is somebody making drunkards of the Russians? Dostoyevsky thought the Jews were doing just that by selling Christians vodka distilled from raisins. The Soviet propagandists bring the same charge against the czarist government, and say that present-day alcoholism is a vestige of the bourgeois past. Eugene Muslin of Radio Liberty has concluded that the Soviet rulers are following the "law of social dissipation," using alcohol (among other things) to divert, dissipate, or drain off the social aggression of the population.

One can also apply the theory of dissipation to the problem of Russian alcoholism from the other end. In this view, the consumer of vodka can use it, at least for a time, to disperse his own fears, sense of humiliation, and feelings of social injustice. He diverts his rebellion from a prohibited area to a legal one. As the nineteenth-century poet Nekrasov observed, "the Russian man drinks instead of rebelling."

Past increases in Russian alcoholism took place during bleak years of political repression. Judging from everything else going on today, the current "great leap" in the incidence of alcoholism is a kind of litmus paper—a result and indicator of the ever stagnant realities of Russian life. □



THE NATION'S PULSE

SUCKLING UP TO THE BOURGEOISIE

by Allan C. Carlson

Breastfeeding holds a somewhat unsavory reputation among conservatives and free enterprise aficionados. Breastfeeders seem to loom behind the sordid attacks on the Nestlé Corporation and other infant formula firms. They appear to be partly responsible for the infamous United Nations code that would uniformly regulate the promotion of infant formula, the recent vote on which left the Reagan administration in embarrassing isolation. Even Ernest Lefever's failure to win confirmation as Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, due in part to his Nestlé ties, seems somehow their fault. Likewise, many people of refined sensibility are deeply troubled by spreading public displays of breastfeeding. Nursing women—"partially exposed breasts!"—are found in public parks, airplanes, shopping centers, and other previously sacrosanct locations. Such "acts of nature," these defenders of decency believe, should occur in the privacy of the home; better yet, in the bathroom.

This all represents woefully misdirected ire. Concerning the infant formula squabble, for example, it is true that rabid anti-capitalist and

anti-Western rhetoric accompanied the UN action and that infant formula has a limited nutritional role to play in both the "developed" and "developing" worlds. On the other hand, the medical evidence is legitimate and overwhelming that breastfeeding is vastly superior to infant formula from the standpoints of health,



nutrition, immunology, natural child spacing, cost, and simplicity. It is equally clear that some infant formula marketers have taken advantage of the gross ignorance and gullibility of Third World ladies in giving or selling them products which disrupt the nursing cycle and which they are incapable of properly using.

Nonetheless, conservative queasiness over the breastfeeding act remains. A symbolic expression of this came a few years back when Governor Edward J. King of Massachusetts—reportedly unnerved by the word "breast"—flatly refused to sign a proclamation declaring "the week of the breastfed baby." (He did eventually allow the tender citizens of his state to celebrate "the week of the naturally fed infant.")

Such squeamishness is surpassed only by the problems that modern feminists have with breasts. The size of female breasts unmistakably differentiates women from men. This is good, in that it allows allies to be clearly distinguished from enemies; yet bad, in the suggestion that women have a unique biology which public policy might want to acknowledge. Breasts serve as sexual symbols. This is good, in that they help women find personal self-fulfillment; yet bad, because pornographers and other men viciously exploit them. Historically, breasts have also served

as a means of feeding newborns and infants. Here real problems arise. As New Age sociologist Rosalind Sands has noted, "the most persistent single note in the history of child-rearing has been the reluctance of mothers to suckle their babies. . . ." Breastfeeding implies reproduction, family commitments, maternal love, and restraints on personal liberation; for the committed feminist, disturbing themes all around.

Amidst this melange of hang-ups and neuroses, it was a refreshing experience in late July to attend the 25th Anniversary Convention of La Leche League International. Held at Chicago's Conrad Hilton, this meeting did not attract your usual convention crowd. The building groaned under the weight of 3,500 mothers from 32 countries and a larger number of newborns, infants, and toddlers. Labeled "the largest gathering of mothers and babies in the Western hemisphere," it was a display of fecundity unparalleled in recent American chronicles. The meeting's purpose was to celebrate and promote "the renaissance of breastfeeding." Its 139 sessions ranged from "technical" themes like "Baby's Position at Breast and Its Relationship to Sucking Problems" to quasi-political matters such as "Legal Rights of the Mother At Home," to fairly grim pop-psychology busi-

Allan C. Carlson is Assistant to the President of the Rockford Institute.

ness like "Father Feelings" and "Father-to-Father Rap Sessions."

As at all conventions, the exhibitors turned out *en masse*, displaying once again the endless adaptability of capitalist production. They included Whittlestone Breastmilk, Inc., The Egnell Breast Pump Company, Happy Family Products, Inc., The AxiCare Human Milk Pasteurizer, and Peek-A-Boo Fashions.

There was modest media coverage. Phil Donahue—fulfilling his fervently held "if a woman does it, it must be good" philosophy—materialized to do a show. The Chicago press, displaying its much vaunted nose for news, was particularly fascinated by the projected passage of 75,000 used diapers through the Hilton's disposal system. As usual, they missed the significance of the event.

La Leche League was first envisioned by two women during a suburban Chicago picnic, and the seven "Founding Mothers" began meeting in October 1956. In promoting knowledge about the techniques of successful nursing, they confronted a formidable opposition. The medical profession, obsessed by the technologies of infant formula and surprisingly ignorant of the medical principles of breastfeeding, nurtured a hostility toward nursing mothers that sometimes bordered on paranoia. Hospital routines, from regularly anesthetized deliveries to enforced separations of mothers and babies, prevented most women from successfully lactating. Add to this a strong mid-century societal aversion to the whole process, and the result was that fewer than one-quarter of new American mothers tried nursing their infants for even a brief period of time.

In challenging this state of affairs, the Founding Mothers brought to their task an almost religious zeal. Their central tenet was that breastfeeding led to good mothering, which created strong families, which benefited the whole of society. When feminists emerged from the shadows in the early 1960s to press vocally for unfettered personal freedom, the League quietly advanced the counter-argument that a baby has a basic need for its mother's love and full-time presence "which is as intense as its need for food." As a true matriarchy, the Founding Mothers presided over the League's subsequent expansion and today govern an empire of 12,500 carefully screened and certified "Leaders" who monthly reach over 100,000 women in 40 countries. The League's holy writ, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, has sold 1.2 million

copies since its first edition appeared in 1958.

Yet merely to recite the organization's brief history is to overlook the more fundamental impulses behind its existence. The first of these is a shared religiosity. The League, while constitutionally and purposefully secular, floats on a strong undercurrent of faith in a nondenominational God.

Second, the League has the mark of an authentic "people's movement." John McKnight, Professor of Communications Studies at Northwestern University, describes La Leche League as "the most legitimate and effective problem solving organization in America." In face of professional hostility and governmental indifference, he notes, the League quietly proved by its ex-

ample, its educational work, and the sheer weight of scientific evidence that breastfeeding is the superior form of infant feeding, a position finally and somewhat grudgingly acknowledged by the American Academy of Pediatrics in the late 1970s. Today, largely because of the League's efforts, over half of all American mothers breastfeed their newborns. Similarly, according to

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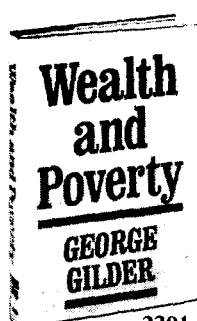
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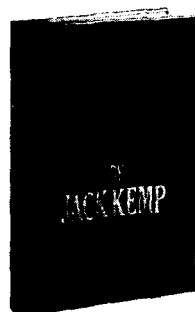
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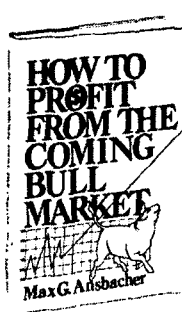
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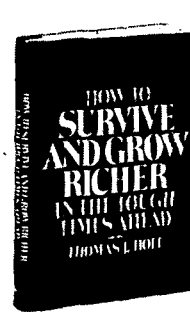
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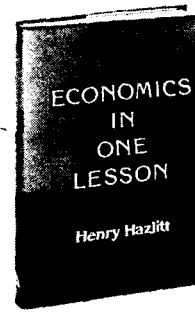
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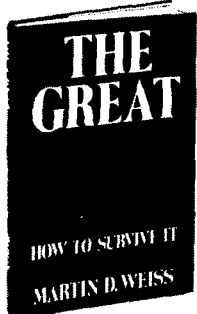
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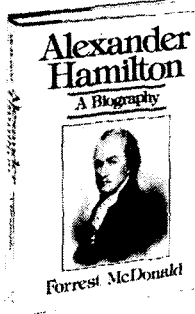
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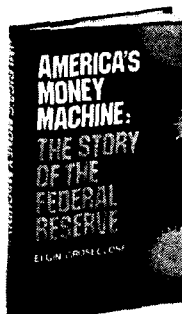
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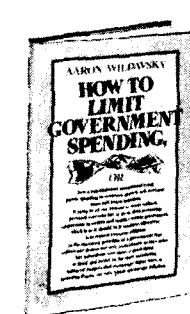
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McKnight, "no other organization in the world influences so many people with so little hierarchy." The League's work is done and an international network maintained almost exclusively by a decentralized body of volunteers.

Third, the League has absorbed a dose of the New Age passion for overturning certain social and psychological conventions. Home births, midwives, "family beds," natural foods, and nursing toddlers have become the icons of the movement, particularly among its younger members; images that still raise eyebrows among elder generations otherwise (by now) immune to culture shock. Phrases such as "If You Love Me, Don't Feed Me Junk," "Mother's Milk is Better Than Any Udder Milk," "Smoking Stinks," and "I'm Organically Grown" adorn the tee-shirts of League toddlers and capture this sense of quiet insurrection.

Fourth, the League is at the same time thoroughly traditional. These are women committed to being "a wife and a mother in the home," speaking out "for mothering as an important and worthwhile career." They preside over large families: four or five children are common; the mothers of ten or more were greeted by wild applause. Convention speakers asserted that "the best gift you can give your current children is another brother or sister"; that "society will pay for the working mother"; that "if God wanted human beings raised in litters [that is, day care centers], He would have sent them in litters." These women are a unique kind of radical.

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Finally, and above all, La Leche League is—in the inappropriately apologetic words of one of its founders—"obviously a middle class organization." Great wealth was not in evidence at the convention. This also wasn't the bowling alley crowd. The League proved to be thoroughly, almost quaintly, bourgeois, a fact conditioned by a good deal of history.

For the feminist historians are correct in emphasizing that the ebb and flow of breastfeeding has been closely linked to changes in middle-class values. Edward Gibbon, for example, found the disappearance of breastfeeding to be an important symbol of the decline of ancient Roman virtue. Moralists ranging from Heinrich von Louffenburg in the 1400s to John Comenius two centuries later argued in vain against the common West European practice of "wet-nursing," or the dispatch of urban-born infants to suckle on the breasts of rural peasants for two or more years, usually with appallingly high mortality. The police chief of Paris estimated in 1780 that of 21,000 babies born in his city, 17,000 were shipped off to the rural wetnurses, while another 3,000 were placed in urban nurseries or wetnursed in the home. Only 700 suckled at the breasts of their natural mothers.

Yet a revolution was already brewing. In 1748, English physician William Cadogan published the first of a flood of influential tracts advocating maternal nursing and other visibly modern child-care practices. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's mid-century novel, *Pamela*, gave literary and intellectual respectability to breastfeeding. At about the same time, economic growth generated by industrial capitalism began to free a growing number of women from the need to devote their time to field and primitive factory labor. According to historian Edward Shorter, breastfeeding served as the critical "sacrifice test" in defining the emerging modern family. It indicated the willingness of women to place the needs of their babies above everything else, a distinctly bourgeois sentiment captured most poignantly in the nineteenth-century paintings of Mary Cassatt. The resulting maternal-infant bond supplied the vital spark which animated the bourgeois nuclear family.

This linkage of family and breastfeeding, however, rested on something more fundamental than economics and free choice. Author and physician Niles Newton, in her 1955 minor classic, *Maternal Emotions*, has described the scientific evidence tying the unique hormones present during lactation to heightened mater-

nal behavior, larger families, and—most significantly—greater confidence among women in their femininity and far less female envy of men. In these respects, the bourgeois family embodied the deepest, most natural, and most socially constructive of human emotions.

In a very real sense, La Leche League represents a rediscovery of this unique bourgeois family ethic, and a renewed expression of middle-class self-confidence and moral purpose, social attitudes prematurely declared extinct. From Soweto to Watts to El Salvador, League women spread their message to the lower classes with the same missionary zeal that the middle class has always brought to its culturally uplifting tasks. There is apt symbolism in reports that the Communist government in Poland prohibits La Leche League meetings in that troubled land, because of their alleged "political nature." Indeed, the League is the bourgeoisie militant.

The sole common denominator among contemporary American women is intensity of personal commitment. In this respect, La Leche League does represent Mothering with a capital "M", an artful combination of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, Earth Mother, and Ida Morgenstern of "Rhoda." The one celebrity League mother at the convention—James Garner's pert photomate Mariette Hartley—appropriately displayed several of these qualities in exaggerated, Southern California fashion.

In contrast to the *Cosmopolitan* cookie-cutter look exhibited by serious career women, however, League mothers presented a fascinating diversity: here a Mennonite woman in plain clothes accompanied by a dozen children ranging from 16 years to three months; there a blind woman with two sighted children, one nuzzling at the breast; elsewhere, a wheelchair-bound paraplegic with her baby sleeping contentedly on her lap. And there was a pervasive sense of sexuality about them all. With babies in Snuggli's, toddlers in tow, and new offspring swelling in the human incubators, the message was clear: These gals are fertile!

More difficult to fathom were the men present at the convention: the "League Fathers." There was much talk of their important supportive role, and League doctrine stresses the traditional male bread-winning tasks. Yet the special men's sessions were confused and depressing affairs, much like a gathering of drone bees. Everyone present had a sense

of involvement in something important, but remained unsure of where to go from here. It was among these men that the overwhelming truth advanced by George Gilder in *Wealth and Poverty* hit home: Women are innately superior to men, and much of what we call work and culture are merely clever ploys to keep males out of trouble while women perform the really important and difficult tasks of nurturing the next generation.

Following the negative American vote on the UN infant formula code last spring, liberal pundits had a field day blasting conservatives for constantly using "pro-family" rhetoric, yet throwing motherhood and babies to the breeze the first time corporate interests were crossed. There is truth to the charge. Dining next to the "limousine liberals" in the finest restaurants are those—let's call them "corporate libertarians"—who find the bourgeois ethic all well and good so long as it doesn't interfere with business.

A case for the American vote can be made in terms of the precedent which the UN code might set, on narrow legal and anti-trust grounds, or as understandably ornery opposition to anything the UN might try to do. Yet morally, it was a mistake. For the defense and spread of breastfeeding in the modern world should be viewed as a missionary act of positive bourgeois cultural imperialism; a blend of a very old and a very new human nurturing technique that strengthens family life and the whole social order.

It is odd how few people have appreciated the irony of an agency of the UN—that asylum where the speeches of every Third World despot and butcher are greeted with the same enthusiasm once accorded the droppings of sacred animals—actually voting to acknowledge the inability of "developing" peoples to handle something as simple as infant formula. It was a vote on par with one to keep liquor away from the Indians. Instead of being anti-Western, the UN action should be seen for what it was: an implicit request by Third World supplicants for paternalistic, neo-colonial treatment from a clearly superior Western culture.

Similarly, La Leche League women—notwithstanding their apolitical protestations—should be recognized as standing on the front line of the pro-family movement, not only talking about families, but having babies and raising them in a hostile liberal culture. Somewhat regrettably, it takes a certain level of fanaticism to accomplish those tasks today. □



THE TALKIES

URBAN WALKMAN

by John Podhoretz

Movies work best as spectacle, and there have been spectacles galore this summer: *Superman II*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Escape From New York*, *An American Werewolf in London*. Unfortunately, there is not a lot to say about these movies. They are entertaining, eye-catching, but the only real issue with them is how many millions of dollars they will make. Therefore, I would like to take this space and write about another spectacle that has made a startling debut of late, and about which there is quite a lot to say.

For \$129, any American can purchase a new stereo system known as a "Walkman." Sony introduced it to the market, and due to Sony's success Panasonic and Texas Instruments, among other companies, have begun selling it as well. The Walkman is a miniature tape recorder, easily attached to one's belt, with comfortable and unobtrusive foam headphones producing the sound. The sound reproduction is extraordinary; with the headphones on, one cannot tell the difference between a Walkman and a very, very expensive turntable-amplifier-speakers set-up. Further, the sound is audible only to the wearer. It is not surprising that the Walkman should achieve such popularity: It is another embodiment of the American Dream. For only \$129, you can own a \$5,000 stereo.

Down the streets of every major city there parade, at all times of the day, men and women with those little black foam headphones round their skulls, each dancing to the beats of various different drummers. They walk peculiarly; whether it be Haydn or the Supremes that plays in their ears, they are obedient to the meter. One must take special care now, as a pedestrian, for it is clear that our Walkpeople are not really seeing us. Even as their bodies sway to and fro with the music, their eyes are glazed, vacant, far away. No fewer than three times have I collided with various Walkpeople, and each time no response was elicited. I said "I'm

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sorry"; but, alas, the little "mike" button that allows the sounds of the world to intrude upon their music had not been depressed. They did not hear me, said nothing themselves, and so walked away, oblivious.

A friend said that at her office, rows of secretaries sit all day, Walkmen covering their ears, typing and typing. If she wished to speak with one of them, she had to tap her on the shoulder, and make a gesture. At this point the chosen Walkperson reached down and depressed her "mike" button. The friend would deliver her message, the "mike" would be released, and the Walkperson would return to her music.

The seductive nature of the Walkman is immediately clear once one puts it on. There is, quite simply, nothing else like it; the world is blotted out, and the fantastic quality of the sound leads one to a sort of ecstasy. There is nothing to distract the attention; indeed, wearing a Walkman even for a short period of time helps one to understand just what function the ears play. For example, while wearing a Walkman one has no sense of distance; depth fades without sound to accompany it. Someone may begin to wave, but it is not at all apparent that he is waving to you. It is impossible to read lips, or the expressions on faces, with all that noise in one's ears.

It also, I need hardly say, deadens the mind. Buddhists meditate by repeating the word "Om" over again: It is very difficult to think while doing this. Imagine what California Buddhists will say! "Search no more for 'inner' peace; these headphones can do it for you."

Too many trees have died in the service of condemning the "Me Decade" (left-wing as well as right-wing trees, I might add) for this writer to climb aboard the bandwagon. Yet if Mr. Tom Wolfe thought that *est* seminars were the epitome of narcissistic frenzy, I fear he thought too soon. For the Walkman is the device that can lead one to the Me Utopia, and make no mistakes. When the world is blotted out, and the

sounds that other people make have no effect, and what you see before you is severely circumscribed, there remains only *me* and the music. And that *me* is untroubled by thought.

I am, no doubt, indulging in hyperbole here. But when one sees a cross-cultural phenomenon like this one, the participants in which include young girls in expensive jogging suits, elderly men in Brooks Brothers suits, bicyclists of every color, cashiers, delivery boys, stockbrokers,

ladies in supermarkets, etc., etc., he knows that something funny is going on.

Well, then, we can laugh. But I ask you: What would you do if a well-dressed graduate of Harvard, a lawyer with a brilliant future, handsome and vigorous, came into your house with a tape recorder strapped to his belt and black foam headphones resting on his cranium, and announced that he wanted to marry your daughter? □



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The Socialist Phenomenon is an important book. It can be considered the most significant essay in political philosophy to come out of Russia in recent years, if we do not take into account the political philosophy in novelistic disguise of Alexander Zinoviev (*The Yawning Heights*, *The Radiant Future*).^{*} It is also a passionate book, and as such it is very likely to stir the reader's own political passions. When one comes across such a book, accepting the author's views (partially or totally) or rejecting them becomes less important than the ongoing intellectual experience in which agreement and disagreement alike seem fertile. Such books are rare and needed.

Shafarevich's essay attempts to give a broad and often quite detailed historical overview of "socialism" (as a state system, on the one hand, and as a doctrine, on the other). But what is "socialism"? The author takes it for granted that the kind of "socialism" to which he refers will immediately be recognized by the reader. While this might be true of a reader with first-hand experience of the Communist version of "socialism," the Western reader would have benefited from a brief historical-terminological analysis of the concept. All the more so as, like many of the most widely used (and abused) terms in today's Western political lexicon, the term "socialism" conveys different meanings, some of them mutually contradictory, to different groups of people. For many of both its adherents and opponents in the West, socialism is a form of liberalism, which sets out to promote, through reform (or through what Karl Popper calls "piecemeal social engineering," as opposed to the utopian-totalitarian variety), the fundamental values of the liberal mind—freedom,

^{*}Interestingly, both Shafarevich (who is a mathematician of world renown) and Zinoviev (who is an equally renowned specialist of modal and mathematical logic), represent the scientific rather than the humanistic community in Russia. As Solzhenitsyn notes in the Foreword to Shafarevich's book, "Scholars in the humanities have been the most methodically crushed of all social strata in the Soviet Union since the October Revolution."

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THE SOCIALIST PHENOMENON

Igor Shafarevich / Harper & Row / \$16.95

Matei Calinescu

social justice, the elimination of privileges and formal inequalities, and so forth. This interpretation of socialism is by no means exclusive of the idea nor incompatible with the ideal of Jeffersonian democracy. At the very least it can coexist with the practice of democracy, for within a truly pluralistic society, it can play a useful role in the political debate, even (if not primarily) for those who disagree with its specific approaches and programs.

The second and contrasting concept of socialism, advanced by the representatives of international Communism (and by certain splinter groups such as the Trotskyites or the Maoists), regards socialism as a stage in the "revolutionary" development of each and every society toward Communism. This kind of socialism can only be achieved through an abolition of private ownership and through a systematic rejection of what its proponents call

"bourgeois democracy" (including pluralism, liberalism's "formal freedoms," and bourgeois conceptions of social justice) in the name of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" which will last until the final "withering away of the state" and the complete "socialization" of the individual. It is this latter collectivistic, utopian, and irreducibly anti-individualistic version of socialism, espoused most prominently by Marx and Lenin, which concerns Shafarevich.

In order to set the Marxian concept of socialism in historical perspective, both as ideology and practice, Shafarevich devotes the first two parts of his book to the "doctrinal"—philosophical, religious, moral—sources of socialism ("Chilastic Socialism") and to a survey of past societies that evolved spontaneously, but that can be seen as structurally compatible with the principles of socialism, and,

in particular, with its cardinal tenet, the abolition of private property ("State Socialism"). Part three of the book ("Analysis") deals mainly with the Marxian concept of socialism, although occasional references to the doctrine of "National Socialism" (as represented by the German Nazi ideologues) are also made. This part attempts to bring together the two separate and apparently irreconcilable historical manifestations of socialism—"as a doctrine (chilastic socialism) and as a state system (state socialism)"—by presenting them as "two embodiments of the same ideal." This ideal itself, Shafarevich thinks, can be understood in its profoundly paradoxical character "only if we allow that the idea of the death of humanity can be attractive to man and that the impulse to self-destruction (even if it is one of many tendencies) plays a role in human history."

The term "death instinct," which the author uses several times to describe the "socialist ideal," is obviously borrowed from Freud, discerned within Marxism, and hence diagnosed, as Freud would diagnose a patient, as its fatal weakness. Shafarevich thus poses Freud against Marx, even though at times he readily, perhaps too readily, incorporates psychoanalysis into what he calls "the socialist world view."

But Freud himself—in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, discussed by Shafarevich at some length—was openly and lucidly opposed to Marxian Communism, whose psychological premises he believed to be based on "an untenable illusion." Now in many ways the Marxist conception of historical development resembles a Freudian conception of psychological development writ large, for, as Shafarevich notes, there is a similarity between a society divided into classes, one of which exploits the others, and a mind divided into categories, one of which tyrannizes over the others. (This thought might have appealed to Freud in particular, insofar as he argued that the historical development of a race is retraced by each individual.) But whereas Marx saw the eradication of (bourgeois) civilization as liberation, Freud saw (the ego-superego) civilization as necessary for the control of aggression. Indeed, whereas Marx saw the bourgeois class as transitory, and therefore capable of elimination, Freud saw the ego and superego as



eternal. "In abolishing . . . private property," Freud wrote, "we deprive the human love of aggression of one of its instruments, though certainly not the strongest; but we have in no way altered the differences in power and influence which are misused by aggressiveness, nor have we altered anything in its nature. Aggressiveness was not created by property."

What is new in Shafarevich's contribution to the Freud-Marx debate is his discovery in socialism of "the death wish," the strand which unites chiliastic socialism with state socialism. Perhaps the connection between what Freud actually said on the subject of Marx (the abolition of civilization will release aggression) and what Shafarevich says on the subject of Marx by appropriating a Freudian category (socialism rests on a gigantic death wish) is that the release of aggression will be so violent that its broad psychological impact will be a desire for womb-like tranquility, or that through the *Rausch* of violence will come the pristineness of death. If so, he would have had an excellent case-in-point in the work of the socialist Herbert Marcuse, who wanted to "pacify existence" (that is, achieve womb-like tranquility) through "liberation" and "spontaneity" (that is, untrammelled aggression). But then, Marcuse is not a "controlled" experiment with which to test the Freudian flaw in Marxism, for he consciously appropriated his concept of pacification from the death wish.

The first part of Shafarevich's book, "Chiliastic Socialism," is a history of what one might call the "utopian mentality," starting with an analysis of Plato's *Republic*. That the germs of modern totalitarianism (Shafarevich's socialism is nothing but the main form of totalitarianism) are to be found in Plato is not new. Karl Popper, in his famous book *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), saw Plato as the first advocate of "utopian engineering" and as a precursor of totalitarianism generally and of the Fascist state in particular (the Fascists occasionally acknowledged Plato as a distant model). Shafarevich then proceeds (maybe a little too abruptly) to discuss the utopian elements of the various gnostic heresies of the late antiquity, which set the pattern for the numerous millennialist and apocalyptic movements of the Middle Ages, from the Cathar sects through Joachim of Fiore and Amalric of Bena to the Reformation. Plato's "utopianism," one should remark, was highly "intellectualistic," while the medie-

val heresies were strongly anti-intellectual movements, anarchistically mystical and, whatever their social impact, based on an extremely crude version of philosophical dualism. Plato is also considered a "reactionary idealist" by those revolutionary materialists, the Marxists, and Plato's Hellenic timelessness contrasts markedly with Marx's dialectical historicism. Nevertheless, such

distinctions are less important when one chooses as a point of focus the utopian dimension of both Platonism and the gnostic tradition.

As with the connection between Plato and Marxism, the link between them and modern socialism (including anarchism) has not escaped earlier intellectual historians. If Shafarevich does not mention them, this is certainly because their books are

unavailable to the Soviet reader. I have in mind such works as Norman Cohn's classic study of medieval millennialism, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism and Reformation Europe and Its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements* (1961); or Thomas Molnar's *Utopia, the Eternal Heresy* (1967), in which one of Shafarevich's major trains of thought is quite closely anticipated,

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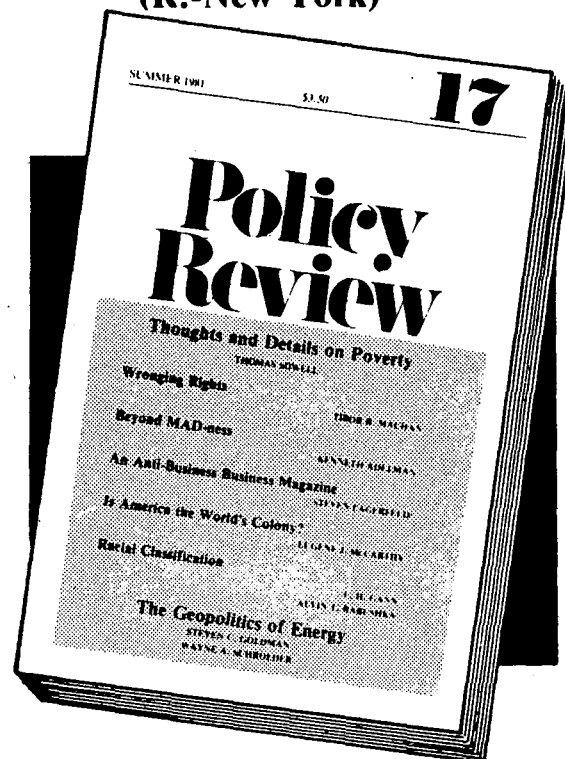
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with the difference that Molnar writes from a Catholic standpoint while Shafarevich, in rejecting the heretical world view, also speaks of the "internal failure" of the Catholic Church itself, and even of its "sin" along the lines of the Eastern Orthodox critique of Roman Catholicism. This critique is summarized in Dostoevsky's *Diary of a Writer* and in his famous "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor," both of which Shafarevich discusses. He obviously agrees with the main thrust of Dostoevsky's ideas, but in stressing the heretical component of modern utopian socialism, he implicitly refuses to see the latter, as Dostoevsky clearly did, in terms of a mere extension of Roman Catholicism. Instead, as is the case with Plato, his interpretation of the similarity between earlier utopian

thought and modern socialism is nuanced and sophisticated enough to admit lacunae in the connections.

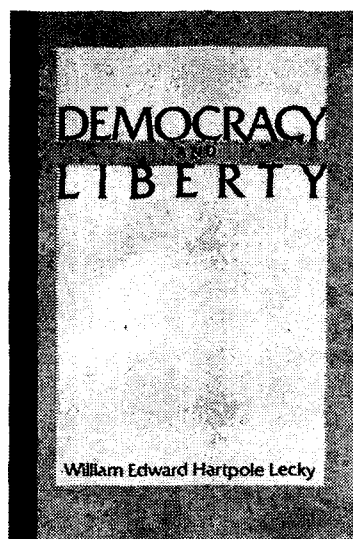
The great turning point in the history of modern socialism occurred after the panoramic utopias of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (More, Campanella), in which the secular-rationalist world view was still not completely separated from elements of theocentrism. It was

during the age of the Enlightenment that the course of history was set for socialism, for the consequences of the Enlightenment's increasingly exclusive "cult" of critical reason were, politically, the French Revolution of 1789, and ideologically, the subsequent emergence of "utopian socialism" (Saint-Simon, Owen, Fourier). Curiously, the Enlightenment is surveyed very briefly (over scarcely a dozen pages) and without any mention of the most influential political thinker of the time, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, or discussion of the contribution this *anti*-Enlightenment figure made to the coming of Marx.

The most original aspect of Shafarevich's book becomes visible in the second part, in his attempt to relate "Chilastic Socialism" (religious and then secular) to "State Socialism." It turns out that socialism as a state system emerged not only independently from, but also long before, the first formulations of the communistic-equalitarian principles of socialist doctrine by Plato. Examples of socialist states are to be found in the ancient Orient (in Mesopotamia and, more specifically, in Sumer; in Pharaonic Egypt, during the first six dynasties of the Ancient Kingdom, in the third millennium B.C. and, almost identically, during the eighteenth dynasty, in the second millennium B.C.; and, finally, between the thirteenth and third century B.C. in China—during the Yin and the early Chou periods of classical Chinese historiography). Other examples of non-doctrinal socialist states, totally unrelated to the former, are encountered in South America—the Inca Empire and, patterned largely after its model, the small and isolated Jesuit State in Paraguay, formed in the seventeenth century and dismantled by the Spanish army in 1767-68. In his discussion of the latter, Shafarevich points out the quite interesting fact that the eighteenth century *philosophes* (from Montesquieu to Voltaire, in his *Essay on Rights*), in spite of their well-known anti-clericalism, saw the quasi-totalitarian rule of the Jesuits of Paraguay as a "triumph of humanity." (By disinterring this *faux pas* by Voltaire and by treating Rousseau as not even a silent partner on the road to socialism, Shafarevich may intend to transpose slightly our common understanding of the role of these two figures in intellectual history, and thereby nudge us closer to an appreciation of the complexity of intellectual interplay.)

In his chapter on "State Socialism" as well as in the concluding part

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It is only three months
before the First Congress
of the Communist Party of Cuba.
The Boniato garrison
greeted this great occasion
with red flags of tortured blood.

They tore apart testicles:

they did it to Roberto Martin Perez.
The invalids were pulled out of
their wheel chairs
and dragged by the legs
their heads bloodied, banged against
the steps:
they did it to Liuva del Toro and to
Pascasio. □

WASHINGTON IN PIECES

John Nollson / Doubleday / \$11.95

Theo Lippman, Jr.

I write a humor column for the *Baltimore Sun*. Many times an incident like this occurs: I write a piece of pure nonsense. An acquaintance then says to me, "So Ronald Reagan played a gorilla in the 1932 version of *Tarzan*? I never knew that before." Or, "I think you're right about making it a capital offense for a black to murder another black, but only probation-before-verdict for a black to murder a white." How can this be? I always wonder. The answer, which is obvious once you see it, only came to me when I was reading John Nollson's essay, "The Art of the Possible." It tells of a "Georgetown Gallery of Political Commentary" in which the works of pundits are sold. Now, I knew there was no such gallery. I'm not that dumb. But I at first believed that Nollson was using real excerpts from the works of real pundits to satirize political commentary. His "Old Master" wrote "There is in the Nation's Capitol, as seen from here in the nearby countryside . . . a mood of cautious optimism tempered by an air of prudent pessimism." And so on in perfect Restonesque brush strokes. And so on in excerpts from "Fauves," "surrealists," "pointillists," "abstract expressionists," "cubists," and "pop artists."

I fell for it in the first three instances, but saw through it when I got to this excerpt from the pointillist-columnist: "Pointillist commentary is distinguished by frequent use of the word 'point,' as in the following example":

Politicians who make this point overlook several other points. The first of these points is point one, which is to say, the basic point, from which all other points follow: Politics is not pointless, but depends ultimately on one's point of view. This is a point worth pointing out.

And then I saw the light. The line

Theo Lippman, Jr. is an editorial writer for the Baltimore Sun.

between satire and reality has vanished in Washington (and thus in America). One cannot tell the difference between real Reston and Nollson-Reston (or between Reagan and Lippman-Reagan). As a matter of fact, so interchangeable are reality and whimsy that after I read the pointillist excerpt and moved on to the other more subtle "excerpts," I resumed believing these were the real thing.

And so, naturally, I have to say of Nollson's work in this and the 44 other essays that appear in this book (most first appeared in this magazine), that while they are often very funny, you can always be sure. I mean, the biggest joke of all would be to sneak serious stuff in, right? To make you laugh at reality? So you have to be on your guard. This is an awkward posture for reading humor. That sounds like a criticism, and it is. Life is tough enough in a democracy without not knowing whether some bit of lunacy is lunacy. When I sit down to be amused, I don't want to be accompanied by an imp of alertness. I'm going right out and apologize to my own readers for subtleties.

Therefore for me, the best Nollson is the fiction that is obvious in every detail—the burlesques, such as his wicked broadside on participatory democracy called "Propositions." In this he traces the referendum back beyond the Progressives of turn-of-the-century America to the Greeks of the Golden Age "when the first Proposition, Proposition Alpha, was submitted to the voters. It had to do with how landholdings should be surveyed for the purpose of computing the local property tax. The Proposition on the ballot read as follows: 'In any right triangle, shall the square of the hypotenuse be equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides?'"

Some of the more obvious and

Who reads The American Spectator?



Donald H. Rumsfeld.

ALSO: Ronald Reagan, Malcolm Muggeridge, Ben Wattenberg, Peregrine Worsthorne, S.I. Hayakawa, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Henry Kissinger, Clayton Fritchey, Milton Friedman, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Midge Decter, James Q. Wilson, Woody Allen, Joseph Coors, Irving Kristol, Henry Fairlie, Alan Abelson, Charlton Heston, Senator Jake Garn, Gertrude Himmelfarb, James Hitchcock, Gen. Alexander Haig, Tom Wolfe, James Jackson Kilpatrick, George Gilder, Jack Paar, Donald P. Buchanan, George Will, J. Peter Grace, Maj. Gen. George S. Patton, III, Fred Iklé, Philip Crane, George W. Ball, Tom Stoppard, William F. Buckley, Jr., Patrick Buchanan, Albert Shanker, Lewis Lapham, Rowland Evans, Robert Novak, Jude Wanniski, Jack Kemp, William Rusher, Richard M. Nixon, William E. Simon, Malcolm S. Forbes, Jr., Frank Shakespeare, Norman Mailer, Clare Boothe Luce, Gerald R. Ford, Melvin Lasky, Nelson Polsby, Roger Milliken, Randolph Richardson, Thomas Sowell, Sidney Hook, Jim Fallows, Edith Efron, Gen. A.C. Wedemeyer, James L. Buckley, Elliott Abrams, Lewis Lehrman, William Randolph Hearst, Jr., Shmuel Moyal, Huntington Cairns, Eric Hoffer, Anne Armstrong, Norman Podhoretz, Jeff MacNelly, Doris Grumbach, Ernest van den Haag, Paul McCracken, Brock Yates, Ray Price, James Wechsler, John Roche, John Chamberlain, William Safire, Neal Kozodoy, Henry Salvatori, David Meiselman, Martin Peretz, Charles Horner, Edward Banfield, Victor Lasky, Raymond Aron, Roy Cohn, Joseph Hazan, Eugene V. Rostow, Michael Novak, Richard Perle, Hugh Kenner, George W. Ball, William Proxmire, Patrick Cosgrave, Jean-François Revel, Luigi Barzini, Tom Charles Huston, Clay La Force, Fred Silverman, John Lofton, Larry Flynt, M. Stanton Evans, Dana Andrews, Richard Whalen, Richard Lugar, Henry Regnery, Charles Peters, John Lukacs, Leonard Garment, Michael Kinsley, Tom Winter, Nathan Glazer, Alan Reynolds, Antonio Martino, Colin Welch, Robert Bleiberg, Herb Stein, Roger Starr, Walter Goodman, Harry Jaffa, Jeffrey Hart, David Packard, Robert Nisbet, James R. Schlesinger, Thomas Murphy, Suzanne Garment, Roger Rosenblatt, Anthony Harrigan, Robert L. Bartley, Dave Stockman, Richard Allen, Ernest Lefever, Sen. Paul Laxalt, Joseph A. Califano, and many others.

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amusing pieces in this collection have to do with Senator Larethan Jerome Wimbol who served 114 years as senator, ran for president every four years, took every position "including all . . . in the Kamasutra," was arrested for hiring wetbacks as legislative assistants, and so on. I suspected it was Henry Jackson he was parodying, but as an investigative humorist (a rare thing), I leave nothing to mere suspicion. I decided to find out which senator Nollson had worked for. (The dust jacket says he had.) Not an easy assignment. Nollson is a pseudonym. But I finally learned his real name. I called the senatorial office where he worked

(not Jackson's). "Is ----- in?" I said.

"He's no longer here," a person with a trace of Hispanic accent said.

"Do you know where he can be reached?"

"The Department of Defense."

Jeee-sussss! A humorist in the Pentagon! Not even the William P. Clark nomination prepared me for this. The ultimate erasure of the line between nonsense and sense. Herbert Hoover said we should laugh at the Depression, but at Domsday? I never called him. I don't want to know what he's doing there. He may only be writing speeches and handouts. But he may be making policy. □

LIEBLING ABROAD

A.J. Liebling / Wideview Books / \$11.95

Mitchell S. Ross

I hereby propose that the bones of the late A.J. Liebling be transferred to the Pantheon in Paris. There the guides regularly note the names and glories of the dead Frenchmen who lie beneath the Left Bank dome, and there they could give our man his due: Here lies A.J. Liebling, *gourmand, écrivain*.

Liebling was a great eater and swell writer, but he was at his absolute best when writing about what he had eaten. Four books are collected in this volume, which is itself Lieblingesque in its girth. *The Road Back to Paris* is superbly idiosyncratic war reporting; likewise the briefer sketches collected in *Mollie and Other War Pieces*. Liebling covered World War II for the *New Yorker* and did it well, but he did it in the spirit of one who wished that the enemy be vanquished and the fighting cease in order that tables might once again fill with *haute cuisine*. His was a distinctive point of view.

After venturing into Spain he recalled, "I had had a fairly adequate lunch, soup and veal, at the hotel in the railroad terminus; the fact that it was possible to get such a meal even at a price far beyond people who lived on Spanish wages appeared to me to mark some kind of advance." Even better is the memory recorded in *Normandy Revisited*: "We decided, therefore, to attend the battle, but

Mitchell S. Ross is the author of *The Literary Politicians* and *An Invitation to Our Times*.

not until after lunch, when we would be in a better frame of mind for it. The Spartans on the sea-wet rock sat down and combed their hair before Thermopylae, and Casey, Boyle, and I ate sole *bonne femme*."

To his credit as a writer Liebling was politically naive. "When I arrived in London . . . I wanted to see General De Gaulle as soon as possible and write a whacking profile about a modern Bertrand du Guesclin. Du Guesclin was the great fourteenth-century guerilla knight who, anxious only to rid France of the invader (in that war the English), fought tirelessly until he had righted what appeared to be a hopeless military situation. Like most of my preconceptions, this one was on the romantic side."

His mind being free of conventional categories, Liebling was able to surrender himself to the excitements and disappointments of experience. He could render trenchant judgments—consider this one, on the condition of Portugal: "The regime of Senhor Salazar, the university professor of political economy turned plainclothes dictator, had kept Portugal solvent, with one of the lowest living standards and highest venereal-disease rates in Europe, but virtually without armament."

At the same time, in the worthy tradition of Stendhal, he was open to flights of fancy, subject to the ironic wisdom of hindsight. *Normandy Revisited* is, accordingly, the most harmonious of the four books here.

Written in the mid-fifties it recalls the war years in the light of a later day. Liebling remembers the summer of liberation, 1944. "All the previous spring, in London, I had been reading clandestine newspapers smuggled out of France. I had cried over them. I do not regret my sentimentality; I wish I had something now that I could be as sentimental about."

Admirable as *Normandy Revisited* is, however, it does not epitomize Liebling as does the last of the four books: *Between Meals: An Appetite for Paris*. I wish Liebling had given it a more heroic title, as this is truly a heroic book. "Each day," writes the author early in his second paragraph, "brings only two opportunities for field work, and they are not to be wasted minimizing the intake of cholesterol." We are introduced to Liebling's friend, Mirande, with whom, naturally, he shares a meal. "We had three bottles between us—one to our loves, one to our countries, and one for symmetry, the last being on the house."

In Chapter Two we learn more of Mirande:

M. Mirande had an equally rich life between meals. He had pleasure of women. Currently pleasure and women are held matters incompatible, antithetical, and mutually exclusive, like quinine water and Scotch. Mirande also gave women pleasure; many women had pleasure of him. This is no longer considered a fair or honorable exchange. Women resent being thought of as enjoyables; they consider such an attitude as evidence of

male chauvinism. They want to be taken seriously, like fallout.

Between Meals was published in 1962, Betty Friedan was as yet unknown. Our gourmand was a prophet.

Between Meals is filled with other insights, for instance, this one, on the popularity of vodka: "The standard of perfection for vodka (no color, no taste, no smell) was expounded to me long ago by the then Estonian consul-general in New York, and it accounts perfectly for the drink's rising popularity with those who like their alcohol in combination with the reassuring tastes of infancy—tomato juice, orange juice, chicken broth. It is the ideal intoxicant for the drinker who wants no reminder of how hurt Mother would be if she knew what he was doing."

But above all *Between Meals* is a celebration of life at the table. "Bread is a good medium for carrying gravy as far as the face, but it is a diluent, not an added magnificence; it stands to the sauce of lobster à l'américaine in the same relationship as a soda to Scotch. But a good pilaf—each grain of rice developed separately in broth to the size of a pistachio kernel—is a fine thing in its own right. Heaped on the plate and receiving the sauce à l'américaine as the waitress serves the lobster, the grains drink it up as avidly as nymphs quenching their thirst."

A year after publishing these lines Liebling died, fat and, in his way, fulfilled, at the age of fifty-nine. *Voilà un homme!* □

DAD

William Wharton / Knopf / \$12.95

Eric Goldstein

You've got to give William Wharton credit: He explores rough terrain in his novels. *Birdy*, which won the 1979 American Book Awards prize for best first novel, concerns a bird-obsessed teenager who is a canary in his fantasy life. Like other tales of obsession, *Birdy* demands a leap of faith into the mania of the hero.

For the leaden-spirited readers whom *Birdy* left on the ground, the novel is a trite celebration of madness-as-coping à la R. D. Laing, soaring with the wing-power of a

Eric Goldstein is a writer living in New York City.

chicken and hailing individualism with J. L. Seagullian profundity. It is something other than prudery that makes you squirm when a novel's hero mates with a curvaceous canary named Perta, squats on the eggs, and warbles "Become now,/Tap through the shell/Of being and taste the/Soft air of your beginning."

With *Dad*, the pseudonymous Wharton moves from flying to dying and once again confronts his subject with graphic intensity. But beneath the gritty veneer—"the smell of age: old sweat, constipation and dried urine"—*Dad* is a clumsy, half-baked novel that exploits the same fantasy-

pop psychology formula as *Birdy*.

Dad is narrated mostly by John Tremont Jr., a 52-year-old artist as inarticulate as he is groovy. But even if you can stomach an aging hipster who tells you "I think maybe I'll try getting [Dad] into meditation or even Yoga," contrivances make the tale he narrates indigestible.

John is living and painting in France when news of his mother's heart attack brings him back to his boyhood home in Los Angeles. He must take care of his father, a retired factory worker who has become disoriented by the collapse of his domineering wife. Mom gets better, but then Dad needs surgery for a tumor. Since all of Wharton's doctors are self-important icebergs—except the Laingian gerontologist, of course—Dad's surgeon scorns advice to withhold the diagnosis from his fragile patient. The bombshell leaves Dad a catatonic. Jake tries to nurse Dad at home but the task is hopeless and Dad goes back to the hospital.

Then one morning Dad awakens, as if kissed by a princess, as "the true John Tremont [Sr.]," the affectionate, upfront free spirit he was never allowed to be. Dad takes up jogging, caressing Mom in public and blitzing her at night, and smoking grass with hippies in Santa Monica. If you think that's cute, Dad also turns out to be a "successful schizophrenic": For 30 years, he reveals, he has been secretly nodding out to an idyllic fantasy life in Cape May, New Jersey, complete with farm and family.

Wharton intends an element of comic fantasy in Dad's second flower childhood and in his dreamy "alternate coping system," but it mixes not at all with what precedes or follows. When Dad's stint as counterculture sage is squeezed of its last drop of didactic treacle, Wharton shortcircuits him again, no less plausibly than he resurrected him before, and Dad expires a few days later.

Wharton putters with aging, father-son love, generation gaps, and the Middle American Family. But Tremont Sr., no matter how conscientiously he remembers to say "niggers," is such a sweet old man and Tremont Jr. is so laid back that the generational and square-hippie tensions are sanitized from the start.

The author of *Dad* hopes to communicate his themes through the observation of the Tremonts' final weeks together, paying only minimal attention to their pasts. Unfortunately, the flaccid voice of his main

narrator is not up to the task. If you want to know the tenor of this novel, read its final two pages; these are John's scintillating conclusions after all he's been through:

Each morning, I'll wake older. My measuring systems will be caught in the quantum squeeze. I'll think the world has changed, is changing faster, that it's becoming less enjoyable . . .

On the other hand, I must learn to take

advantage of being old . . . I can drop out of the chase for dominance, women, work, power, status. For the first time since childhood, I can know something of freedom, freedom to be myself . . .

. . . And I hope I can consider something of death, have some insights into its seeming abruptness, irrevocability, see it as the source, the reason for life as we know it.

Putting such prose into the mouth

of a fictional character does not excuse it. Nor is there any literary device—except self-parody—that can justify dialogue the likes of Dad's droolings on dope:

They ought to give this to all old folks, Johnny. It's a shame wasting it on young people. I've been telling them here how they're squandering their lives away sitting inside smoking, doing nothing, with the whole world out there. But it

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certainly is nice for an old geezer like me.

Birdy, at least, reached for the moon and did not look back. *Dad* dallies with some weighty topics, then rambles all over the Californian clichéscapes, with John-the-artist preaching that plants have feelings,

hippies, "can be a reminder of how humans are meant to be," and natural childbirth would cure many of our hangups.

I shall spare details of the cross-country drive John makes with his restless dropout son, which lamely counterpoints the generation gap platitudes of the main plot. In a

Pennsylvania motel, however, John delivers a historic speech to his kid:

There are so many pressures to "take it easy," "cool it," "be groovy." I'd hate to have you be a twentieth-century dilettante. To me, that's the enemy. I can cope with mere Communists—Russian, Chinese, or Cuban—the Nazis, the Calvinists, the Baptists, the Catholics or

the KKK, any ordinary group of dogmatists, but the real enemy, for me, the dangerous ones, are the leisured, advantaged dilettantes who have dominated and clogged the machinery of creativity and invention for centuries.

Where was William Wharton during this sermon? In Cape May, New Jersey? □

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

The Main Event

What is most disturbing about the debate (*The American Spectator*, March and July 1981) between Mr. Shawcross and Mr. Rodman about events in Cambodia and the measure of culpability is that it becomes an argument of scriptural interpretation rather than an examination of the historical events that occurred in that country. As someone who over a period of more than two decades watched and reported on events in that country for American and foreign media, could I make the following points:

1. Cambodia was always an intimate part of the Indochina conflict known first as the French War, then the U.S. War. For example, if you examine the communiqués of the war between France and the Vietminh forces from 1947 to 1954, you will find that almost all the engagements which took place in the South—that is, in old Cochin China, the southern part of the country before the partition in 1954—took place in Cambodia. As early as 1958 when I visited

Saigon at President Diem's invitation, and discussed with both him and former Prime Minister Son Ngoc Than of Cambodia—he headed the Japanese-sponsored government, you know—it was plain that events in South Vietnam (then the Republic of Vietnam) could not be separated from what went on in neighboring Cambodia. To appreciate this, one needs to go back to the fact that during the French occupation of Indochina, the administration of Cambodia and Cochin China as protectorates was closely linked as were communications, etc., etc. (It was the U.S. aid program that built Sihanoukville into a port and the connecting highway to Phnom Penh, another irony of this history.)

2. While I would in general side with Rodman, his problem is that U.S. policy—and therefore, documentation—was often aimed at obscuring the real situation. I remember a comment from a young foreign service officer in the early 1960s—he has gone on to finer things with an oil company, and alas, doesn't even

remember making the remark to me—which went like this: "I am not in favor of our going into Cambodia. But someday we may have to. And right now what we are doing is distorting the case for doing it by hiding evidence." Rodman obliquely refers to this in his reference to Sihanoukville and the arms traffic through it which helped make possible the 1968 Tet Offensive against South Vietnam. The whole sequence of events in Indochina—in which the escalation came from the Communists, not from Saigon and Washington—is obscured by this. See my stories in *U.S. News & World Report* reporting the entry of regular North Vietnamese troops into the southern fighting in the summer of 1964 which the Johnson administration sought to camouflage until early 1965.

3. In fact, what happened was that Sihanouk saw the denouement of the U.S.-Communist Vietnam war coming in Vietnam as early as 1968 and his Congress of Indochinese Peoples—I was the only foreign correspondent there—was intended to get the

Vietnamese out of his country before the war ended. Already it was obvious that their infrastructure far overwhelmed the Cambodian governing structure. And the problem, after all, is more than 500 years old. (Son Ngoc Than once said to me, justifying his policy of collaboration with a Saigon government rather than Sihanouk's attempt to use, first the French, and then the Chinese, to outmaneuver the Vietnamese: "In the long run, we must establish a relationship with the Vietnamese.") Sihanouk told a French correspondent in the mid-1960s the same thing in another way: "If there is someone speaking Khmer in Southeast Asia a 100 years from now, I will have been a success.") That conference almost collapsed when Sihanouk was forced to withdraw a speech in which he demanded a Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia—certainly indicating then that their occupation amounted to more than just border areas as Shawcross would have us believe—or find his Vietnamese and Chinese delegates walking out.

4. What we have here, gentlemen, is a case of failure of communications. It is the same old presentation of so-called "hard intelligence" without any reference to history, geography, or the philosophical and psychological motivations of the players. God help us if we are now to have 30 years of trendy conservatives playing the same sort of game that the liberals (who gave us econometric explanations of our economy, content analysis of the communications media, and computerized documentation for socio-anthropological studies) have perpetrated, which led to the catastrophic disasters in Indochina—not in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia separately.

—Sol W. Sanders
New York, New York

There is opportunity in America!



Sarkes Tarzian Inc. Bloomington, Indiana

I think of myself as a rather rare individual for at least two reasons: 1. I read *The American Spectator* and 2. I

drink New Albion beer. Indeed, I downed a porter while reading Douglas Bartholomew's excellent article in the July issue. But, as you observed in an essay on fine brews six or seven years ago, "On my death bed give me Guinness," or words to that effect.

Concerning a different and somewhat less important subject, "The Main Event" between Peter Rodman and William Shawcross sounds like history repeating itself. I am referring to the debate that raged among academics in the late 1960s and early 1970s over the origins of the Cold War.

The "revisionists" attempted to justify Soviet duplicity, brutality, and aggression as a series of understandable reactions to historical circumstances and America's paranoia, economic imperialism, etc. Everything was always our fault. The revisionists seemed to have a compulsive need to demonstrate that America was always wrong.

So it is with Shawcross and his ilk in connection with the Vietnam War. The same kind of intellectual sleight-of-hand, distortion, and questionable documentation is being employed. Scholars like Rodman are left scurrying in their wake, an academic version of the political truth squad, attempting to set the record straight. I wonder if they ever really catch up to the revisionists?

—John T. Fennell
Los Altos, California

Crotch Checks

This letter concerns John Podhoretz's "revealing" review of Alan Alda's movie *The Four Seasons* (August). I have now read the article many times and I am finding it increasingly difficult to ignore the frightening (albeit unintentional) message Podhoretz has managed to convey.

What concerns me chiefly is not Alda's attempt to undermine the masculinity of the male multitudes, but instead the profound insecurity of the writer who seriously considered Alda to be a threat. You must pardon me if I 'wax Freudian,' but in this game of amateur psychoanalysis all is fair. Podhoretz's diagnosis of the situation is startlingly incorrect. It is not Mr. Alda who suffers the torture of the unconscious motive; it is Podhoretz. *The Four Seasons*, Alda's fair and accurate representation of human relationships in contemporary American society, seems to have aggravated Podhoretz's obviously unresolved castration complex. No longer does he fear emasculation at the hands of his biological father, however. He now suffers a more generalized anxiety—the profound

fear of castration at the hands of that great progenitor of influential ideas, mass media.

I pity him. The media is a ubiquitous and powerful force in the life of the modern man; I should hate to live in fear of it. Given the state of his psyche, however, I am sure that Podhoretz is not a member of that odious group of individuals who passively "await the undressing." Writing and disrobing are similarly revelatory activities; they both make it impossible to conceal dismemberment.

—Jill Counts
Indianapolis, Indiana

The article by film critic John Podhoretz is a good way to finish a subscription to your sheet. The critique of *The Four Seasons* was in fact a cheap shot at Alan Alda. Mr. Podhoretz obviously cannot stomach Mr. Alda's avowed feminism. Mr. Podhoretz should perhaps conduct a crotch check if he feels lacking. And

as for his advice "to head for the exit the next time you hear classical music emanating from the soundtrack of a Hollywood film"—to hell with it.

Bye, bye, *American Spectator*.

—Lynn Scharbow
Alice, North Dakota

P.S. Just so you know where I'm coming from, that's Mr., not Ms.

Deeply hurt by these accusations, Mr. Podhoretz does not feel up to facing them, but asks that you keep those cards and letters coming in.

—Ed.

Alan Alda, Cover Boy

Of all the artistic works I have ever gazed at, the classic work has to be the cover drawing of Alan Alda in your August 1981 issue. What can one say? No drawing (or photograph, for that matter) has succeeded so well in capturing the true essence of its human subject. Those delicate, slender, effeminate limbs. Those long,

tapered, manicured fingers. The way the slanting of the eyes, the upturned corners of the mouth, and the jowls on the face combine to give Alda his characteristic self-indulgent smirk. The fact that his head is swelled up to twice the size of any of his other bodily features. . . . And am I mistaken or do I detect the growth of mammary glands protruding from the upper part of his trunk?

Best of all, of course, are the flowers in the drawing which provide the same effect, say, as Oliphant's little birdie, furnishing the ever-so-slight, ever-so-subtle addition that packs such a devastating wallop. The point is clear; this charming figure is so sickeningly filled with sugar and spice that even the flowers are nauseated by his touch.

Yes, the picture as a whole gives the reader a wonderful perspective of its subject. . . .

My one regret is that your cover artist did not even bother to auto-



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graph his work, giving me no chance to compliment him personally. Perhaps he's that artist who never waits for thanks, whose only reward is seeing to it that artistic justice is done.

—Mark L. Siegel

Los Angeles, California

The artist in question is Elliott Banfield.

—Ed.

Sorry

In my August 1981 article on the Conservative Public Interest Law Firm, I wrote that Michael Horowitz, the author of a comprehensive study on such firms, had unsuccessfully sought funding for a public interest firm of his own. Mr. Horowitz states that on the contrary he had been unable to accept such funding because of other commitments. I regret the error and apologize to Mr. Horowitz.

—Fred D. Baldwin

Carlisle, Pennsylvania

We Represent Business

The purpose of this letter is to take exception to certain statements contained in the article "Rising Above Principle: The Conservative Public Interest Law Firm" by Fred D. Baldwin, which appears in the August 1981 *American Spectator*. In that article, Mr. Baldwin wrote: "... the [United States] Chamber of Commerce maintains a litigating arm, but it is more like a trade association. It is explicitly business oriented and has not attempted to avail itself of tax-exempt status for contributions."

To set the record straight, the organization to which Mr. Baldwin referred is the National Chamber Litigation Center, Inc. (NCLC). NCLC is a separately incorporated, public policy law firm whose purpose is to represent business interests in adversary proceedings before the courts and regulatory agencies. Although

affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, NCLC is funded exclusively by membership dues and contributions which it receives from more than 1,000 members of the business community. NCLC is exempt from the payment of federal income tax pursuant to §501 (c) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code, which is applicable to business leagues. (To our knowledge, NCLC was the first litigation firm to be so classified by the IRS.) Contributions and dues paid to NCLC are deductible as a business expense.

Finally, contrary to the intimation of the article, NCLC does not "function like a trade association." NCLC does not lobby the Congress, participate in notice and comment rule-making, engage in general business or industry promotion, or undertake the broad range of programs which characterize the activities of the U.S. Chamber of trade associations. Rather, as stated earlier, NCLC's express purpose is to ensure that the business community is represented in significant public policy litigation by the use of its own staff of attorneys and through the judicious use of outside counsel. (NCLC did testify on one occasion before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee concerning changes to the FOIA, as a result of NCLC's litigation experience under the Act.)

There is one point on which Mr. Baldwin's reference was entirely accurate: NCLC is the only national litigating firm which represents business interests exclusively. The underlying philosophy of NCLC is that the public interest can only be properly and fairly determined if the

viewpoint of business is an effective part of the public policy decision-making process.

—Stanley T. Kaleczyc

Director of Litigation, NCLC

Washington, D.C.

Kudos

Congratulations on Robert Skidelsky's article on Keynes (August 1981)—informative, and very free of the only-just-submerged hysteria that sometimes informs writing on serious topics, even in your excellent magazine.

—Donald Kahn

Miami, Florida

Pay No Mind

I must disagree with Tom Bethell on the effectiveness of Leslie Gelb's attempts to propagate his opinions (September). I read the article in question; I did not read it with the same care that Bethell used; and I did not get a sense of distaste for Reagan's foreign policy. I did get the idea that the Soviet Union did not like the new policy and I regarded it as good news.

For several years, at least, conservatives have been pointing out that x-percent of reporters are liberal or that y-percent of their articles are slanted left. All of that is irrelevant unless someone pays attention. The evidence provided by last November's elections is that the average reader of *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, or the *Boston Globe* pays no attention. I would appreciate it if conservatives would stop criticizing the media and start governing.

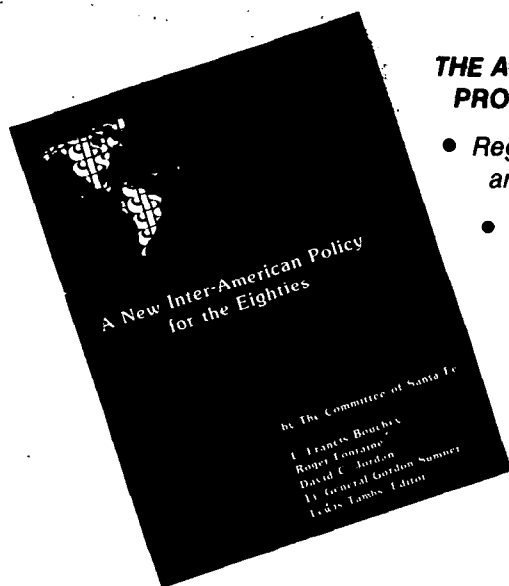
—Joseph Hertzlinger

Jericho, New York

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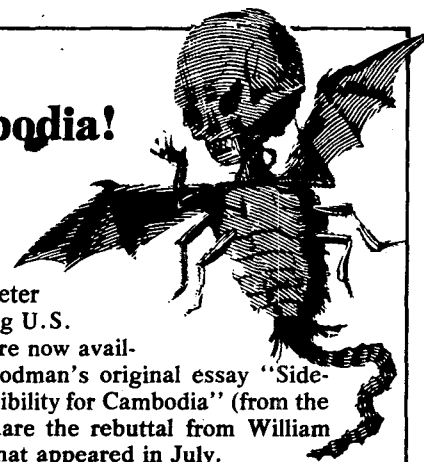
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EDITORIAL

(continued from page 5)

professors. I have also read some from art lovers, though these letters are considerably shorter than those of the pros, and less violent.

Essentially, Will's critics agree that, when it comes to art, this columnist is a pantywaist. It is the mission of contemporary art to jar us. Contemporary art is supposed to scrape the bones, crack the skull, gouge eyes, and tear off an ear. Its duty is to shout at us, spit on our children, unbuckle our belts while we are not looking. Contemporary art, if it is truly aglow with Minerva's light, is supposed to make us feel like morons.

Will finds works like "Verticle Kilometer" and "Room Temperature" incomprehensible, and so he grows snuffy. He seems to have forgotten that all great artists were ignored in their time. Some are still ignored. It is one of the achievements of our day that great contemporary artists can be misunderstood and still walk off with \$300,000, often snatched from Uncle Sam himself. A few years ago, the gifted Carl André arranged apolaustically 36 boulders on open land in Hartford, Connecticut. Very imaginatively, he called it "Stone Field Sculpture" and was paid \$87,000, much of it by the National Endowment for the Arts. Will, naturally, objects.

William Carlos Williams tells us that in the time of Cézanne a "transition took place . . . from the appreciation of a work of art as a copying of nature to the thought of it as the imitation of nature. . . . It is still the failure to take this step that blocks us in seeking to gain a full conception of the modern in art."

Cézanne, of course, took the step. Braque took an even larger step. Braque is said to have taken his pictures outdoors, just to see how his creations ranked against those of nature. If they were up to snuff, he would sell them for a lot of money. If they were not, he would sell them for a little less.

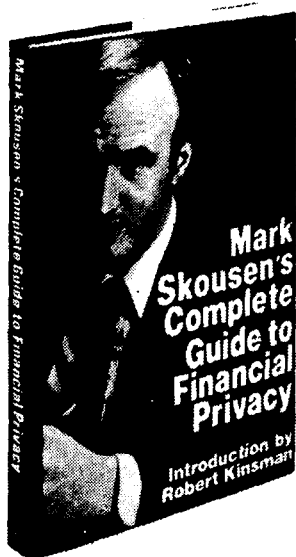
I myself have been an avid champion of contemporary art. Moreover, I have been an active participant. Some years ago, while visiting the *Musée nationale d'art moderne*, I came across a room dominated by a freestanding canvas on which there appeared bland portrayals of life-sized people in line at a bus stop. Jolted by an artistic flush, I rushed to the edge of the canvas and took my place behind the last figure in line, a rather well-proportioned lady, probably French. I stood there motionless

in an old trench coat, expecting disgruntled art fans to call in the gendarmes any minute. Nothing happened. For 20 minutes a score of connoisseurs passed by very pleased. Finally, my leg muscles began cramping; I gave up the canvas. Had I stood there much longer I might have been offered a position on the art faculty of a great university. Possibly I would have been given a satisfying

lump of swag from the National Endowment for the Arts.

For those of us who appreciate contemporary art, there is always an exalted moment or two in the museum when the message of the weird enters us, giving us fresh insights into all those George Wills frowning around us. It is ineffable. Last month at New York's Museum of Modern Art, I experienced just this

when I viewed a huge transparent toothpaste tube filled with real animal organs. Do you doubt that such a masterpiece is on display in New York? Do you think I would make it up? Ask the pros now hectoring George Will if such an exhibit is possible. And whether they answer yes or no, ask them why. Their explanations will tell you much about art in our time. □



HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF INVISIBLE TO THE I.R.S.

A Message from Mark Skousen

Three years ago I met a field auditor with the Internal Revenue Service. At social gatherings, when the talk got around to the mess in Washington and everyone's gripes about the government, he would interrupt with, "Now what did you say your social security number is?"

He was joking—or so he said. But his words set me thinking. *If the government can catch me with a number, then the power to tax is indeed the power to destroy.*

I began to study the situation. I was appalled to discover how much the government and business groups could find out about my personal and financial affairs *without me even knowing it.*

But I also learned that there were steps I could take—perfectly legal steps—to keep the snoops out of my life.

Then, as I got deeper into the problem, I realized that other men and women were troubled too. They were angry, but they felt helpless to do anything about it. When I told them the simple steps they could take, for example, to protect their social security number most of them just wouldn't believe me, until I actually proved it. One friend suspected his boss was spying on him. I showed him a free, easy way to find out whether his office phone was bugged. A friend of my wife's was having trouble with her husband. He was living beyond their means, spending their savings on heaven knows whom. I was able to show her how to store her valuables safely, outside her home and her safe deposit box.

But one thing I learned after three years of research. *Nobody had ever written a book about how I could protect my privacy.* It seemed that everybody was afraid of what the government would do to him.

Well, I don't consider myself a hero, but I decided to take on this project myself. After all, I am not doing anything illegal—or recommending anything illegal. My book is not for criminals. (They already know all the illegal methods.) It is for concerned citizens who *don't* want to break the law, but want to do everything possible to keep the government, business competitors, or prying relatives out of their private lives and their financial affairs.

My publisher calls the book *Mark Skousen's Complete Guide to Financial Privacy*. If secrecy, financial and otherwise, is one of your concerns, I'm certain my book will help you, in dozens of ways. For example:

1. 5 reasons why you need financial privacy now.
2. How to make sure your larger checks are *not* available to the government.
3. Treasury rules on foreign bank accounts: 5 promising *legal* loopholes.
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6. 2 ways to get a sizable loan without collateral and without revealing the purpose of the loan.
7. Risks you should *not* take to maintain privacy.
8. How to mail money out of the country anonymously.
9. The 10 best ways to hide your valuables.
10. You *can* avoid probate, and the harmful publicity that goes along with it.
11. The terrible powers of the IRS.
12. Sample contract to assure bank privacy.
13. The benefits of a (perfectly legal) fictitious company checking account.
14. The 6 best tax havens. Advantages and disadvantages of each. 6 common reasons for using a tax haven.
15. How to use money orders, cashier's checks and travelers checks to enhance privacy. How to avoid the pitfalls.
16. How the post office can monitor your mail.
17. IRS devices to learn more about you.
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The New York Times

Jailbird belletrist Jack Henry Abbott, now suspected of having murdered a non-literary waiter while on parole, is submitted to the ultimate indignity, to wit: being made into an occasion for hackneyed moralizing in the editorial columns of the illustrious *Times*:

The rage that builds up behind bars doesn't go away after release; convicts who served shorter and easier terms than Mr. Abbott say they find it difficult—and dangerous—to handle.

So perhaps Mr. Mailer, who learned much about prisons in writing "The Executioner's Song," should have known better. It's easy to dismiss his efforts on behalf of Mr. Abbott as radical chic, or the overly romantic celebration of literary ability. But perhaps too easy. Mr. Abbott's writing may be unusual, but his state-sponsored rearing in rage and murder are not. For that, we all must bear some responsibility.

[August 13, 1981]

Vegetarian Times

An iconoclastic outburst in the pages of the leading bunny-feed journal:

A meditation

Relax, take some deep breaths, close your eyes. . . .

See and feel your body in perfect, radiant health. Feel the life energy pouring through you, cleansing and healing you.

Affirm the following:

"My body is perfectly healthy."

"My body is perfectly pure and healthy."

"I always tune into my body and eat exactly what's best for me."

"Whatever I eat is good for me."

So be it—so it is!

[September 1981]

The Nation

Mr. George Sealdes—presently putting final touches on his twentieth book, *The Great Thoughts*, possibly in Moscow—takes time from his lucubrations to notify loyal *Nation* readers of yet another villainous plot against their freedom: *Reader's Digest*:

From the start, the *Digest* was a repository for [George] Wallace's political and social prejudices and hatreds. Without exception, these views were far right and at times . . . pro-fascist.

As even the most casual student of the *Digest* knows, the monthly is virulently antilabor, anticonsumer and antipublic ownership of almost any kind. With the regularity of a heartbeat, the *Digest* serves up articles attacking any national move toward "socialized medicine." The *Digest* thought our pursuit of the Vietnam War was just swell and delights in supporting our corporate adventures in Latin America.

[May 23, 1981]

The Washington Post

A sadly unaccommodated Professor Edward C. Smith of The American University presents some very glad tidings indeed in the correspondence section of Washington's leading morning paper:

Architecture of the past has been essentially absent of any accommodations for the visually impaired and physically disabled.

However, during the past two decades many architects, often at the encouragement of their patrons, have attempted to compensate for their profession's past acts of discrimination by designing barrier-free structures that simultaneously accommodate the needs of the disabled and avoid compromising the building's aesthetic integrity.

[August 13, 1981]

The Indianapolis Star

The slops of idealism as pumped out on the hustings:

Warning that many blacks have become "passive and complacent," U.S. Rep. G.T. (Mickey) Leland (D-Texas) exhorted his listeners Sunday "to stand up and fight . . . the evil called Ronald Reaganism."

Speaking on the final day of Indiana Black Expo here, the second-term congressman said blacks have become complacent since the passage of the Voting Rights and the Civil Rights acts.

"Sure, white folks don't call us niggers anymore, at least to our faces, but it has the same effect. We think everything is all right. Everything is not all right."

Leland then issued an appeal.

"I'm asking you to commit ourselves . . . so we can save our people and at the same time rally the force that's going to combat the evil called Ronald Reaganism. We are in trouble. The KKK is on the rise. What I fear most is the Moral Majority because they say God is on their side."

Leland called Mr. Reagan's policy racist. "It is anti-black. It is anti-woman and anti-poor white folks, for that matter," he added.

[July 13, 1981]

The Ann Arbor News

The independent views of two free-spirited Soviet alumbardo, wowing the gulls:

Two Soviet officials painted a picture of a Soviet Union willing to negotiate and resolve differences with a United States which is becoming dominated by right wing extremists.

The U.S.S.R. officials spoke Monday night in Angell Hall as part of a multi-state tour. They were in Ann Arbor to visit the University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies and said they were presenting their own views, not necessarily those of the Soviet Embassy.

[March 17, 1981]

The Nation

Surrounded by enemies and toxic molecules, Miss Tracy Freedman of the renowned Center for Investigative Reporting slogs on to apprise us of real-life conditions near Niagara Falls:

Last summer, two girls and one boy who lived in the neighborhood surrounding the Love Canal chemical dump committed suicide. The boy was 16 and lived in a largely forgotten public-housing project located 100 yards from the canal. The two girls were both 14. One shot herself; the other reportedly died of an overdose of her mother's sleeping pills—sedatives which were prescribed to help her mother cope with the problems of living near the nation's most notorious toxic-waste dump.

These cases are extreme examples of the insidious effects of Love Canal on the children. The psychological damage to young lives has been considerable, yet this aspect has been little noticed by the press. Children living near the canal where Hooker Chemical Company dumped more than 20,000 tons of toxic chemicals in the late 1940s and early 1950s are obsessed with fears of premature death. Very young children have chronic nightmares of toxins oozing from their bodies, while others have regressed to bedwetting, baby talk and clinging to their mothers. Children of 5 and 6 seem shy and disoriented, according to teachers, doctors and parents, and they are bitter toward the company they say "poisoned" them. Some are shunned by their former friends, who call them "contaminated."

[May 23, 1981]

The New York Times

A stirring report from the front lines of the Fifth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women where the Our-Enemies-Are-All-Around-Us thesis was on every fleshy, sensuous lip:

Feminism, the cultural patterns that perpetuated male dominance, the irrelevance of much of the current women's movement to women in minority groups and the dangers of a return to the anti-feminism of the 1920's and 30's were among the themes dominating the Fifth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, which ended here today. . . . A warning that "conservative forces have captured the power to fulfill our gloomiest predictions" was voiced by Joan W. Scott, professor of history at Brown University, in her keynote address. She said the Surgeon General-designate, Dr. C. Everett Koop, was a foe of abortion, that the Attorney General's office was being staffed "with assistants whose careers have been dedicated to the abolition of affirmative action" and that "the only high-ranking woman in the Administration gives no cause for celebration." "Jeane Kirkpatrick is not someone I want to represent feminine accomplishment," she said, speaking of the chief delegate to the United Nations.

... "The circumstances of the 1980's bring to mind the 1920's and 30's," she said. "Then, after the triumph of winning the vote, women faced a well-organized antifeminist movement which struck at the cultural and political bases of female solidarity." . . . Gerda Lerner, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, was one of the star attractions at the most widely attended panel. More than 500 people heard the new president of the Organization of American Historians outline "A General Theory of Women in History." The hour-long talk, a condensation of a book in progress, advanced the thesis that the oppression of women was the model for the invention of slavery. "The oppression of women antedates slavery and made it possible," she said.

[June 19, 1981]

The New Haven Advocate

The personal deposition of Miss Colleen Collins in the correspondence section of a leading revolutionary organ:

I do not like wearing clothes, I do not like shaving my under arms, and I do not like sitting in polyurethane chairs. I would like to run naked in the woods and subsist on roots and berries. I cannot do that; I am civilized. Civilization is a terrible burden. In the past, however, I never complained. Now, I am complaining.

I am addressing my complaint to (it hurts me to write these three words in an uninterrupted sequence) President Ronald Reagan. You see, Ronnie is suffocating the only consolation civilization affords, art. Art! The most wonderful expression of true human dignity we know—art! Ronnie is cutting desperately needed funds to the arts so that we can buy more MX missiles: having MX missiles makes us civilized.

I think that the illumination of the soul is more important than the annihilation of the species. Furthermore, I think that even Ronald Reagan has a soul, possibly a soul with potential. Who knows? After all, Ron, you have never been exposed to real art. I know; I have seen your movies. Perhaps if you could bask in the light of Mahler and Monet, you might appreciate truth and beauty. So save the arts, Ronnie . . . for your own sake.

[March 11, 1981]

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The Queen's English as it is spoken in the august courts of our land:

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[NLRB vs. S.S. Logan Packing Company; 368 F. 2nd 562]

[4 Cir. 1966]

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